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THE NEWSPAPER FOR SITTINGBOURNE, ISLE OF SHEPPEY, FAVERSHAM & DISTRICT



Issue No 115
Available from Wednesday,
November 25, 2009



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Picture RSPB-IMAGES.COM

MARSH IS A VOLE HAVEN

Water voles are doing so well at RSPB Elmley that the marshland is home to the country's biggest colony. It's a welcome fight back for the whiskered creatures that inspired the character Ratty in Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows*.

Now one of Britain's rarest mammals, the population is thought to have crashed by 90 per cent in 20 years, hit by pollution, accidental poisoning by pest controllers and attacks by mink. Recently a £5,000 fine was introduced for injuring one or disturbing its habitat.

The RSPB believe the undisturbed refuge of the marshes and ditches at Elmley has helped boost numbers.

■ BY JILL HURST

EXPECTANT mothers in Swale will be among the first patients in the country to try out a controversial new NHS cash card.

Mums-to-be will be given the chance to take part in a three-year national trial which will see them purchasing their own health care services using a preloaded debit card.

Health campaigners have criticised the pilot, which will be jointly run by the Eastern and Coastal Kent Primary Care Trust, Kent County Council and Kent University, and warned it could be used by the Government to limit funding and force patients into prioritising their own health needs.

Sarah Green, 32, a teaching assistant from Sittingbourne, is four months pregnant, and said she had enough to think about already.

She said: "This is my first pregnancy and we have a lot on our plate. We've had to consider how we will manage financially, what we need to buy, scans, tests and classes. On top of all that being given a card and told to buy my own services is just too much. I don't need to feel in control of a budget; I just need to have confidence in the professionals that take care of me."

Nick Goodwin, senior fellow in health policy at The King's Fund, warned there were major hazards ahead for the project.

He said: "There is evidence from similar schemes in Europe that money may be used on things that do not improve health care, or people find they do not have enough money to cover their needs."

Royal College of Midwives senior analyst Sean

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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2 David Pybus talks about his range of fragrances inspired by history. Search 'Scents of Time' @yourkenttv.co.uk



3 All the build up for Gills' weekend game with manager Mark Stimson. Search 'Gills' @yourkenttv.co.uk

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VARIETY: Volunteering jobs can range from festival promotions to beach-cleaning

Volunteer to have fun and to be inspired

■ BY JILL HURST

YOUNG people across Swale are being offered the chance to get involved in a range of exciting volunteering activities, ranging from festival assistants to stilt walkers.

National youth volunteering scheme, *involved*, is encouraging 16 to 25 years olds to sign up to their local youth action team and take part in a range of community projects.

Kayleigh Grant, 18, a student at Christchurch University, said that *involved* was a flexible way to volunteer.

She said: "I had a stereotypical image of what volunteers are like, but it really isn't like that at all.

"We come from all walks of life and we get to organise and take part in exciting activities.

"We've worked as festival assistants, cleaned beaches, taken part in santa runs, carol-singing and even stilt-walking. The list is endless.

"Because we are helping people we definitely have the feel-good factor.

"You don't have to sign up forever.

You can come and go project by project, so there is never a reason to feel tied down."

Aaron Cooper, 18, from Sittingbourne, said volunteering was a good way to get ahead.

He said: "You gain a lot of experience. I've worked as a teaching assistant at Sittingbourne Community College and this will prove invaluable when I come to find a permanent job."

Youth volunteer advisor with *involved* Rachel Coppins said her aim was to find new and exciting volunteering activities that would attract and inspire youngsters from all backgrounds.

She said: "*involved* recruits youth action teams made up of young people who want to learn new skills and get involved with the community, whether this is by organising their own events or by working with the *involved* team on youth-led community action."

Find out more by sending a facebook message to Rachel Vsu or by emailing Rachel@vsuinkent.org.

• Email yoursware@kosmedia.co.uk

NHS cash card 'will give patients control'

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

O'Sullivan said he was worried the scheme could put poorer women at a disadvantage.

He said: "The danger is that the scheme is taken up by the better informed middle classes at the expense of more deprived people.

"You might get some high performing birth centres that would attract women outside their catchment areas, but will women in deprived areas be able to access the same care?"

The pilot is eventually expected to include older patients, the terminally-ill, carers, and mental health patients.

PCT assistant commissioning director Alison Davis said the scheme was not designed to cut costs.

She said: "The Kent card is designed to give people more control of their own lives. There is no expectation that it would become compulsory."

yoursware

NEWS IN BRIEF

Keep the house clean and stave off flu bug

HOUSE WORK is just one way to fight off winter infections according to Kent's chief nurse.

Director of Nursing Sarah Andrews at the NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent said that all types of activities helped to stave off flu, including hoovering and cleaning the oven.

She said: "Stay active, even moderate exercise can bring health benefits for all. We all know exercise is good for you and can help you keep warm in the winter."

Dogs help raise cash for Christmas treats

GREYHOUND race-goers helped a children's charity raise £6,000.

The Caldecott Foundation held a fundraising night at Sittingbourne's greyhound track on November 13 to raise money for youngsters who have suffered neglect or cruelty.

Fundraising chief Sam Scott said the money would be spent on Christmas holidays and events.

She said: "The festive season is often the hardest time of all for children who are not with their family."

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Investigator brought in to find serial arsonist

■ BY JILL HURST

POLICE hunting a serial arsonist on the Isle of Sheppey have employed a top criminal profiler to crack the case.

Geographical tracker Neil Trainor was asked to help police catch the Sheerness arsonist, who has torched 27 cars over two years, causing almost £60,000 worth of damage.

Police sought the help of Mr Trainor, who works for the National Policing Improvement Agency, after linking the crimes. The investigator has spent 44 years hunting criminals and is one of the country's top profilers.

Detective Chief Inspector Nick Gossett said: "Police established these clusters of fires were all linked some time ago and since then we have ploughed extra resources into the investigation.

"We have been analysing patterns of times, locations, witness evidence and vehicles targeted, right down to the colour. Samples from destroyed cars have been sent to forensic experts and there are also a number of other important lines of inquiry which we can't go public on because it is an ongoing investigation.

"I would like to reassure the people of Sheerness that we are using every technique and tactic that we have to detect these fires. The arsonist has not struck for two months which could indicate they are feeling the pressure of our investigation."

The first car to be targeted was a Ford Fiesta in St George's Avenue, between November 23



Picture: PHIL HOUGHTON

and 24, 2007. A Land Rover Discovery was the last to be damaged on September 18. The vehicle was parked in Wellesley Road.

The majority of fires were in central Sheerness, but two cars were targeted in Minster during August 2009. The arsonist has struck a range of vehicles at all times of the day and night. Although the police have found links between the attacks they could not confirm whether they are seeking a single arsonist or a group.

Detective Constable John Wood said that the police were keen to hear from anyone with information. He said: "We feel sure that the per-

son responsible lives in the community and I am confident that with the public's help we can catch them.

"Has someone come home smelling of smoke and been evasive about it? If you have the slightest suspicion you know the arsonist, we want to hear from you."

Officers said another car fire in Winstanley Road, Sheerness in the early hours of November 19 was not the work of the Sheerness arsonist.

Anyone with information should contact Sheppey police on 01795 419161 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

Body found on track identified

THE BODY of a woman found on rail tracks at Sheerness station has been identified as Linda Marie Kenward.

British Transport police were called to the train station after reports of a body on the line on Saturday, November 14.

The 47-year old from Valenciennes Road, Sittingbourne, is thought to have died after being struck by a train.

A police spokesman said: "From our enquiries we know the woman was at Sheerness station on the evening of Friday, November 13, and we are appealing for anyone who saw anything, or who has information that could assist our investigation to come forward."

The station was closed for three hours while police and ambulance crews were at the scene. The death is not being treated as suspicious.

An inquest was opened and adjourned on Monday, November 23, pending further enquiries.

Anyone with information should call the British Transport Police on 0800 40 50 40 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Fire crews shore up conservatory

STRONG winds caused part of a house to collapse in Queenborough sparking fears for residents' safety.

Emergency services were called to the property in Gordon Avenue at 9.30am on November 18, after a conservatory blew apart, causing dangerous debris to become loose in the high winds.

Firefighters obtained timber from a wood merchant to stabilise the property.

A spokesman for the fire service said that while it was unusual for crew to undertake repair work, it had been necessary due to the serious risk of injury.

Sheds destroyed in garden blaze

FOUR garden sheds were destroyed when a blaze spread through back gardens of a Sittingbourne street.

Emergency services struggled to reach the fires on November 21, in Coombe Drive, and the blaze was eventually contained after fire crews accessed the houses via Elm Grove at about 2.30pm. Police are not treating the fire as suspicious.

Lifeboat rescues windsurfers

TWO windsurfers had to be rescued in strong winds off Sheppey.

Sheerness Inshore Lifeboat Eleanor was launched to save the two men just off Minster shingle bank at 2.35pm, on November 22.

Both men were found holding on to marker buoys. Crews took them safely ashore.

Driver injured

A WOMAN driver was injured in a crash in Graveney Road, Faversham just before 7pm on November 21.

Emergency crews treated the woman at the roadside, but she did not require hospital treatment. Police are investigating the course of the crash.

Shoppers welcome chance to discuss issues with police

SHOPPERS had the opportunity to give police a community health check at a street surgery in Faversham.

Almost 200 people visited a mobile unit in Tesco's car park, Crescent Road, on November 20 and listed their top three concerns.

Police community officer (PCSO) supervisor Graham Mart said people's priorities were clear. He said: "Although the results of the questionnaires have yet to be analysed it seems dog-fouling, speeding cars, litter and anti-social behaviour are people's main concerns.

"We were surprised at the number of people who said they didn't have any concerns or worries and had seen an improvement in recent months, which was really positive."

Mother and daughter Sheila Beal and Jessica Calvert said they would like the event to take place more often. Mrs Calvert, of Millfield Road, said: "I think the police do a good job and you always see the community officer walking around our estate. I'd

like to see street surgeries like this held regularly."

Mrs Beal, of Broomfield Road, added: "It is easier for the police to come to the people. It makes it so much easier for us to pass on any concerns."

The street surgery was the result of a collaboration between members of the Faversham neighbourhood team, Swale council and KCC gateway mobile unit.

PCSO supervisor Mart said the feedback would be included in plans to make the community a better place. He said: "The aim was to identify issues that were of concern to the community, but the work does not stop there.

"The results will be analysed ward by ward and working together with partners such as Swale council we will act on people's concerns.

"This is the third street surgery we have held at Tesco in Faversham in the last six months and we plan to hold more both in the town and in surrounding villages."

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Pile-up trucker trapped

A LORRY driver was trapped in his cab for more than an hour after a three-vehicle pile-up on the M2.

Firefighters used specialist equipment to free the man after the accident, between junctions five and six, at 12.20pm on Thursday. He was airlifted to hospital in Ashford and treated for leg injuries.

Three cars were also involved in the collision. A woman driver was taken to hospital with minor injuries and discharged. At one point both carriageways were closed while police cleared debris. The cause of the crash is not yet known. The lorry driver's injuries were described as not life-threatening.

Drink-drive 'mercy dash'

WHEN Jamie Baker's friend injured an arm, he drove him to hospital even though he was twice over the drink-drive limit.

Canterbury magistrates were told Baker, 19, of Windermere, Faversham, was unable to call an ambulance and felt he had no choice. He was driving the friend's car when police stopped him for speeding.

Debbie Pizzey, defending, said Baker was five miles from hospital when stopped: "He was facing exceptional circumstances. His friend was bleeding profusely. He had no choice but to take him to hospital."

Police called an ambulance and his friend was treated. The case was adjourned until today (Wednesday).

Targeting benefit cheats

SINGLE people who receive a council tax discount will be the target of an anti-fraud campaign by Swale council.

Recipients of the 25 per cent reduction will be investigated using credit reference agencies to identify benefit cheats.

Revenues and benefits manager Sharon Fox said targeted checks would be carried out over the next few months. She said: "The council is determined that those who claim a discount they are not entitled to will no longer be able to cheat the system."

Horses rescued by team

ANIMAL rescue experts at Faversham fire station were called to save two horses in one day.

The specialist team, which cover the whole of Kent, travelled to Wilmington last week to help a horse that had fallen down in a field and was unable to stand.

They also rescued a second horse in West Hythe after it became trapped in a ditch.

The horses were freed using rescue equipment adapted for animals.

Green activist attacks isle regeneration plan

■ BY JILL HURST

AN ENVIRONMENTALIST has criticised Swale council after it formally agreed to a £400 million regeneration plan for the Isle of Sheppey.

The scheme, which includes the construction of 2,000 houses and business parks in Queenborough and Rushenden has come under attack from Kent Green Party spokesman Steve Dawe.

Mr Dawe said the council needed to stop building and start thinking: "There are 18,000 empty homes and 6,000 vacant commercial properties across Kent. In Swale alone, Kent Science Park has never been filled to capacity and there is enough space elsewhere.

"Swale has the worst record for carbon emissions in the county and they should be looking at using resources they already have rather than continuing with their desire to build on green land."

South East England Development Agency official Nick Young said the plan would be realised over the next ten to 15 years.

He said: "The formal approval by Swale council brings us one step closer to realising the vision for a revitalised Queenborough and Rushenden bringing jobs, boosting the economy, connecting neighbourhoods, improving education and amenities as well as enhancing the area's historic and ecological qualities.

"The master plan is the result of five years



EMPTY SPACES: Kent Green Party's Steve Dawe says the £400m regeneration will eat up Sheppey's land

detailed analysis and extensive consultation with the community and stakeholders."

Swale council leader Cllr Andrew Bowles said: "We are pleased with the Government's continued interest in and commitment to the area.

"The plan has attracted much public interest and achieved wide community support and its adoption is good news for local people, who are keen to see proposals become a reality."

Swale council was due to meet on Monday discuss a carbon management plan for the borough.

Residents and businesses will have the chance to view the final master plan and ask questions on Thursday, December 3.

There are two drop-in sessions at noon and 6pm at the Gateway community centre, Rushenden Road. For more information, contact Austin Clays on 01795 668 029.



Cadets wave of pride

A SEA cadet volunteer from Faversham is celebrating after being honoured for 59 years of service.

John Burden, 74, was presented with the award by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Allan Willett.

Mr Burden received a meritorious certificate which recognises dedication and commitment to the reserve forces.

Iwade sea cadet volunteer Mark Gambell, 38, was also recognised at the ceremony after serving 19 years.

Dignitaries from across Kent attended the ceremony, which was held at Ashford International Hotel, along with 170 friends and family of those honoured on the day which included volunteers from all over the county.

Mr Willett, pictured flanked by the duo, paid tribute to their hard work and commitment.

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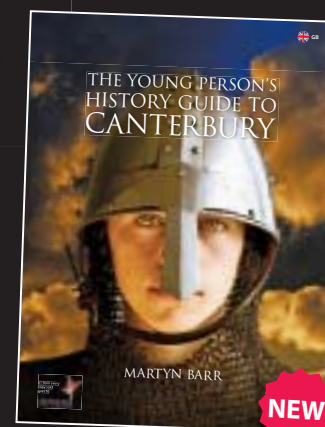
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NEW!



BURNING ISSUE: Ultraviolet rays leave lasting damage after the tan has faded, warn health officials

Leisure centre sunbeds alarm health experts

LEISURE centre chiefs have refused to back a ban on sunbeds despite health experts' warning that excessive use increases the risk of skin cancer.

Swallows leisure centre and the Sheppey leisure complex provide sunbeds, yet Swale council is not considering a ban, despite health fears.

NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent's senior commissioner, Kallie Heyburn, said: "The number of young people using sunbeds is worrying."

"Sunbeds give out ultraviolet rays which can cause skin cancer. Many sunbeds give out greater doses of UV rays than the mid-day Mediterranean sun."

"We know that people who have excessive exposure to UV rays before the age of 20 have a greater risk of melanoma later in life. "Young people may think a tan makes them look healthy, but a tan is your body's attempt to protect itself. We would strongly urge everyone, not just young people, to never use a sunbed."

As well as the council-run leisure centres, there are up to 20 private tanning outlets operating across Swale with many using guidelines set by the Sunbed Association as an indicator of good practice.

Syndale gym in Faversham confirmed it regularly checked association regulations

■ BY JILL HURST

and did not allow under-16s to use tanning equipment.

Personal trainer David Holbrook said: "We care about our members and pride ourselves on complying with both association and health and safety rules."

However Sunbed Association chief executive Kathy Banks questioned the link between the use of sunbeds and skin cancer.

She said: "While there is no legal age restriction in the UK, it is good practice not to allow under 16s to use sunbeds."

"However, if teenagers are 16 or over then it is their prerogative. You are unlikely to get cancer if you use sunbeds moderately and have the right skin type."

But a Cancer Research rejected Ms Banks' claims.

She said: "Using sunbeds just once a month can increase the risk of cancer by 50 per cent. When the tan has gone, the damage remains."

Cancer Research is campaigning for coin-operated machines to be made illegal, in line with Scotland which is set to see them outlawed from December 1.

Cllr Gerry Lewin said: "We would ask people to look at the advice of the trust and make note of it when they make their own choices about whether or not to use sunbeds."

yoursware

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prison turbine exhibition

WIND turbines capable of powering up to 2,300 homes could be built at HMP Stanford Hill on the Isle of Sheppey.

An exhibition will be held at Eastchurch village hall tomorrow (Thursday) from 2pm-8pm, informing the public about the 2.5 megawatt turbines and outlining the environmental and technical studies planned.

Energy generated by the turbines would save about 4,700 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year. Jo Fleming, regional manager at Partnerships for Renewables, said it was important to work with local people every step of the way.

"The aim of the exhibition is to encourage residents and environmental groups to come along and talk to us," she added.

The company has already applied to Swale council for permission to install a temporary wind monitoring mast at the site.

Stolen booze confiscated

A LARGE stash of stolen alcohol has been seized by police in Sittingbourne.

More than 1,500 bottles of drink and four kegs of beer were confiscated in Murston.

Sergeant Jason Hedges said there was still a large amount of booze unaccounted for and appealed to anyone offered bar supplies by unlicensed sellers to contact the police.

A 37-year-old Murston man was arrested on suspicion of handling stolen goods. He was bailed until December 15.

Contact Sittingbourne police on 01795 477055 or the free and confidential Crimestoppers line on 0800 555111.

Illegal storage firm fined

A SCAFFOLDING company has been fined £5,000 for illegally using land at Iwade as storage space.

Deverson Direct pleaded guilty at Maidstone Crown Court to using the land at Old Ferry Road despite being served an enforcement notice.

Swale council enforcement manager Peter Hincsesman said: "The company had every opportunity prior to proceedings to comply with the notice."

The company was also ordered to pay £1,364 costs.

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A quick preview of high-speed service

PASSENGERS sampled the high-speed train service between Faversham and London at the weekend.

The first train left Faversham at 8.59am on Saturday, calling at Sittingbourne on its way to St Pancras.

Trains will run every half hour on Saturdays only until December 13 when the full timetable will be introduced.

The test period was designed to preview the service and resolve any teething problems.

The new timetable is available at www.southeasternrailway.co.uk.



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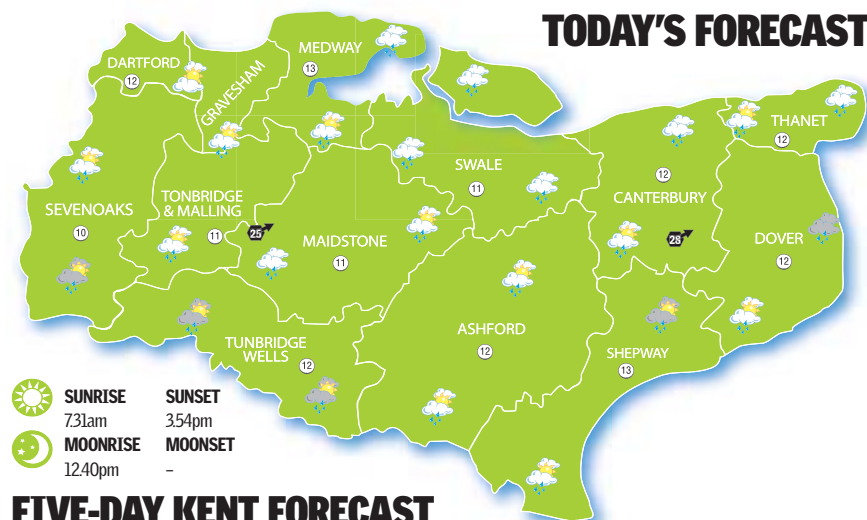
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Chatham	Saturday	8:48am	5.0m
	Sunday	9:49am	5.3m
Dover	Saturday	7:24am	5.6m
	Sunday	8:12am	5.9m
Dungeness	Saturday	7:30am	6.4m
	Sunday	8:23am	6.7m
Ramsgate	Saturday	7:54am	4.3m
	Sunday	8:42am	4.5m
Sheerness	Saturday	8:36am	4.8m
	Sunday	9:37am	5.1m
Whitstable	Saturday	8:39am	4.6m
	Sunday	9:34am	4.8m

AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	12°C	Madrid	14°C
Athens	16°C	New York	12°C
Barcelona	18°C	Paris	13°C
Beijing	5°C	Rome	16°C
Bombay	32°C	Sydney	19°C
Cape Town	30°C	Tenerife	23°C
Cardiff	12°C	Tokyo	14°C
Gibraltar	18°C	Vancouver	6°C
Hong Kong	20°C	Warsaw	9°C
Las Palmas	23°C	Wellington	15°C

FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	14°C	13°C	11°C	10°C	11°C	Gravesend	15°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	10°C
Canterbury	14°C	13°C	11°C	10°C	10°C	Maidstone	15°C	13°C	11°C	10°C	10°C
Chatham	15°C	14°C	11°C	10°C	11°C	Ramsgate	14°C	13°C	11°C	10°C	10°C
Dartford	15°C	13°C	12°C	11°C	10°C	Rochester	15°C	14°C	11°C	10°C	11°C
Dover	13°C	12°C	10°C	10°C	9°C	Sevenoaks	13°C	11°C	9°C	9°C	9°C
Faversham	15°C	14°C	11°C	10°C	11°C	Sittingbourne	15°C	14°C	11°C	10°C	11°C
Folkestone	13°C	12°C	10°C	10°C	9°C	Tonbridge	14°C	11°C	10°C	10°C	10°C
Gillingham	15°C	14°C	11°C	10°C	11°C	Tun Wells	14°C	11°C	10°C	10°C	10°C

Is cinema change closer?

A SITTINGBOURNE cinema could still be turned into a nightclub after Swale council granted a licence to sell alcohol.

Swale licensing committee met on November 10 and granted permission to open the premises until 3am Sunday to Wednesday, and 6am the rest of the week.

Playing music and sales of alcohol are restricted to 2.30am and 5am respectively.

Owner Stephen Cross, who was refused permission to develop the site earlier in the month, will now renew his campaign to develop the building.

Members of Swale's planning committee voted unanimously against the plans to turn the character building into a nightclub on October 8.

Borough place to be green

SWALE households have topped the charts as the borough was placed on a national top 20 dry recycling list.

The news adds to the district's success last week when it was named a top ten performer for waste reduction.

Dry recycling covers all paper and cardboard products, plastic bottles, cans and aerosols.

Swale council cleansing services manager Alan Turner believes the success is down to the hard work of residents.

He said: "This news is very encouraging for everyone. Residents must take a huge amount of credit for supporting the scheme."

Cutbacks danger to birds

THE RSPB is warning gardeners and farmers that cutting down hedges too early will deprive birds of a vital food source.

Mild weather has resulted in autumn fruits lasting much longer than usual.

The wildlife charity is asking for bushes and hedges to be left untrimmed until winter or early spring.

Open Monday to Saturday 9.00am until 5.00pm

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QUESTION & ANSWER

STEPHANIE MEAD



Q Tell us a little bit about yourself.

A I am the senior community safety officer working at the new multi-agency community safety unit based in Swale House, Sittingbourne.

The Swale partnership is made up of a number of agencies including Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue, Kent County Council and the Eastern and Coastal Primary Care Trust.

I undertake a lot of projects to address crime, disorder, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse issues across the borough of Swale.

I have held this position since July 2008 before which I worked for KCC, initially in the management information team of the children, families and education department before moving on to the Kent partnership.

Q What's the best bit about your job?

A No one day is the same as the next. I meet and work with a people from a variety of backgrounds, undertaking work that is at times desk-based, but at other times is more hands on. I like the fact that my job makes a difference to the lives of people in community.

Q And the worst?

A All agencies have a limited number of resources, which makes the worst thing

about my job not being able to deal with every problem. Unfortunately there are occasions when we are unable to deal with every enquiry. Thankfully this is very rare.

Q Swale gets a bad press sometimes - tell us something positive.

A I find the people of Swale are something to be very positive about. In my field of work, members of the public are often very keen to get involved to make their area a better place and young people seem particularly keen to do so.

I have been involved in a number of projects that have relied on young people volunteering and they are always very keen and eager. I recently worked with a number of young volunteers on a graffiti mural in Milton Regis and a number of others who were part of a street clean-up in Sheerness at the beginning of November.

Young people are involved in a lot of very positive things, but unfortunately not all of their good work is common knowledge and they don't always get the positive coverage that they deserve.

Q If you could do any other job what would it be and why?

A Good question, and the answer is that I do not really know, but I would love to live in a hot country where the sun always shines.

Q What do you do in your spare time?

A I enjoy the normal things that most people do, such as watching films, reading books and going to the gym.

Q What was the last book you read - tell us a bit about it?

A It was the new Dan Brown book, The Lost Symbol. I enjoy a book that challenges you to think about things.

Q And the last film?

A Being bit of a Disney Pixar fan, the last film I saw was Up. A bit of light-hearted fun is always good.

Q And theatre?

A I am a big fan of musicals. The last one I saw was We Will Rock You - it must have been about the sixth time I'd seen it.

Q And finally...

A There are a lot of people in different agencies working to ensure that Swale is a safe place to live, work and visit. You do not have to put up with anti-social behaviour or crime. Your community officers are here to help.

Q & A

Swale council community safety officer Stephanie Mead talks to **Jill Hurst** about the challenges of her job and how the young people of Swale are enthusiastic about making the area a better place.

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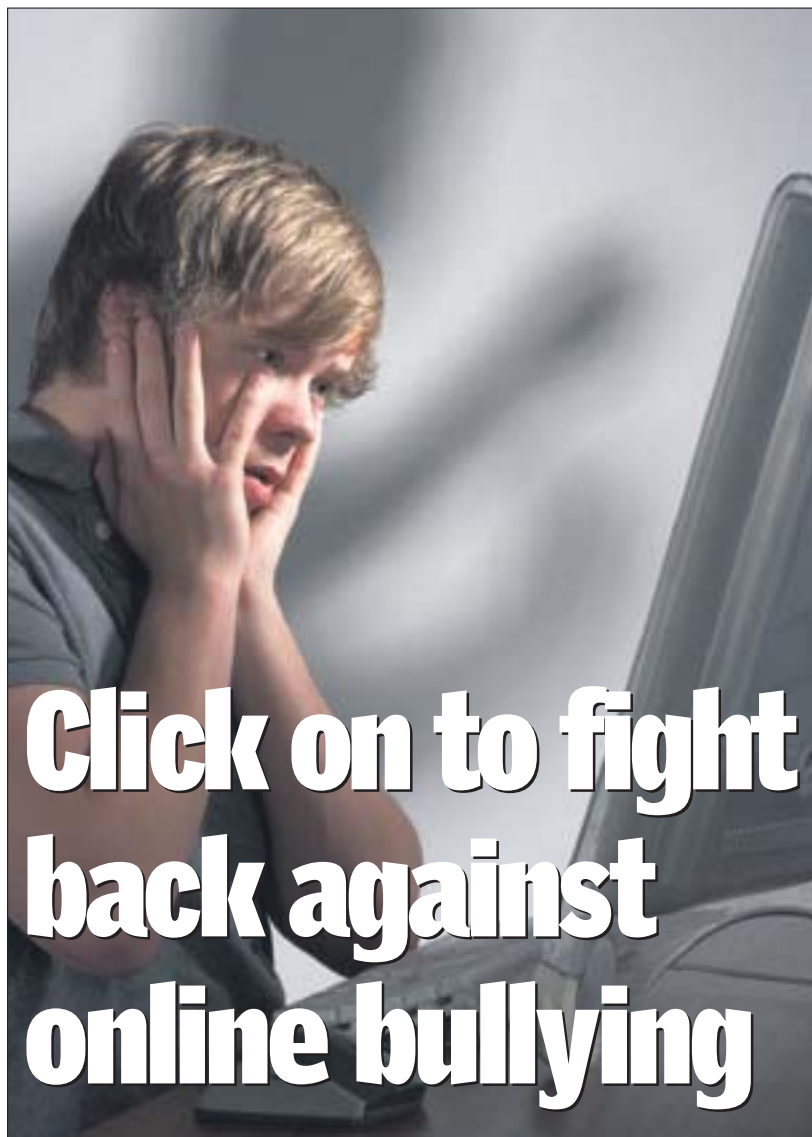


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Click on to fight back against online bullying

WHEN a schoolgirl found herself contemplating suicide after yet another abusive message from bullies she knew she had to tell someone.

The 13-year-old, who had recently moved to the area with her family, had been the target of a gang of girls who repeatedly subjected her to cruel taunts while at school.

But when she started to receive abusive emails and texts from the bullies at home she turned to her parents for help.

"I never felt safe," she said. "Even when I was at home they would put messages on my Bebo page or text me horrible things."

"It got to the point that when I went to sleep at night I hoped I would never wake up. This was when I spoke to my parents and they helped sort it out."

Campaign

For many her story may be familiar as national figures released this week show 61 per cent of 11-18-year-olds have witnessed some form of cyber-bullying.

And research by the Department for Children, Schools and Families found that more than a third of 12 to 15-year-olds have faced cyber-bullying.

Social networking sites, such as Bebo and Facebook, and computer messaging are a part of everyday life.

Last week was Anti-Bullying Week and the Government ran a campaign alongside called Stay Safe in Cyberspace.

One of the highest profile deaths this year was 13-year-old Sam Leeson, from Gloucestershire, who was found hanging in his bedroom by his mother and sister.

His Bebo page showed the extensive bullying he had been subjected to and even after his death shocking videos mocking his death were posted on Youtube.

Emma-Jane Cross, chief executive of

■ BY MARIJKE COX

national charity Beatbullying, said: "We know the consequences of cyber-bullying are just as traumatic as face-to-face bullying."

"In the past year alone we've witnessed tragic suicides resulting from relentless online hate campaigns."

"Suicide is an extreme manifestation, but research already underway shows us that increased isolation, poor educational attainment and self-destructive behaviour all readily follow cyber-bullying."

"We must all act together and fast."

Kent County Council's online Safe at School survey aims to find out about children's experiences and perceptions of bullying.

Leyland Ridings, KCC deputy cabinet member for children, families and education, said anyone who is being bullied should tell someone.

"If you go back years bullying was somewhat of a taboo subject," he said.

"Yes it went on, but it wasn't the done thing to talk about it."

"It's quite the opposite now. Anti-bullying is a priority for all of us."

"This survey is one way we can get a better understanding of the perceptions and experiences of bullying."

"It is anonymous and that will help those that are afraid to speak out."

Last week KCC's e-safety officer Rebecca Avery visited schools across Kent to make children and parents aware of the harmful effects of bullying over the internet.

She said: "Online bullying can be very traumatising for children. It's just as harmful as bullying in person."

"Parents may not even be aware that their child is a cyber-bully or is being bullied."

Visit www.kenttrustweb.org.uk to fill in the Safe at School survey.

If you are a victim of bullying, for more advice you can visit www.bullying.co.uk, www.beatbullying.org.

Charity calendar has comedy at its heart

THE deaths of her mother, grandmother and father-in-law all caused by heart conditions helped convince one Kent office worker she needed to do something to help others.

And she came up with a charity calendar with a difference – all scenes from famous British sit-coms.

Carolyn Trice works for DIY giant Homebase in their offices in Maidstone.

The personnel administrator said: "I wanted to do something for the British Heart Foundation because of the amazing work it does. And at this time of year, people are thinking about getting a calendar, so why not produce one."

But this is a little more modest than the many subtle naked ones on the market these days. Carolyn said: "I didn't want to do that as we are all too modest and shy anyway, and it has been done lots of times."

"That's why I suggested we do scenes from

traditional British comedies and everyone was delighted to join in."

The Homebase staff got together six weeks ago and produced 12 classic shots from shows like Steptoe and Son, and the Royle Family.

Steve Lidstone, the company's operations team leader at the Aylesford base, said: "The company agreed to print these for free for us, so every single penny we make from the sale will be going to the charity. We are asking for a minimum donation of £5 per calendar."

Carolyn added: "This is a project that is close to my heart, if you excuse the pun, because of what happened to my family. I lost my mother Joan King a few years ago, and my dad Alan has just had a quad heart by-pass."

"I am keen for the money we raise to be spent on defibrillators which can help lives. If someone has a heart attack, using one of these will give them a 40 per cent better chance of survival."

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yourswaleblogger



Each week we get a mystery writer to air their views on living in Swale...

Back in the old days we could bank on a face-to-face service

THE Government recently announced it was going to create more banks from the assets of the frail, wounded ones we own at the moment.

Quite frankly, I wonder why they want to create more organisations that provide such poor service to their customers.

Forget those smiling faces in TV adverts travelling around the Outer Hebrides in cash ice cream vans, helping wizened old islanders pay-in their pension. It would be nice if they offered that level of service in the high street.

For example, helping families deal with elderly relatives' financial affairs. From my own experience this leaves a lot to be desired. In one case the bank immediately dispatched letters fining my dad for transactions while he was in hospital.

It didn't seem to matter how many times we told the bank he was ill and we had to look after his affairs, it just fell on deaf ears and the

computer-composed letters kept coming and the fines kept increasing.

Then my partner's recently bereaved father had to deal with an outstanding credit card balance. He is partially sighted and slightly deaf and yet they insisted the only way he could deal with the account was by talking to some distant call centre whose operators understandably could have no idea of the circumstances he was in.

They couldn't understand his Welsh accent and he couldn't make out their Indian one. (Strange really as they often sound quite similar).

These sorts of cases must be happening everyday and yet the banks make no allowance for the sort of people they are dealing with: people who are not born in the internet age, people whose only use for a computer mouse is as a paperweight.

You know, old-fashioned people who used to make this country money by making steel and ships, or rebuilding it after the Nazis tried to do their worst with bombs and V2 rockets.

At least they had something to show for

their efforts, rather than the city traders moving money around that isn't actually there.

The banks have our money which they use to create their profits. Most of them now have even more of it which we paid to the Government for schools and hospitals, thanks to their dodgy lending practices.

Yet they can't even stretch to having a member of staff people can meet in a branch and talk to about everyday problems that make banking difficult. And don't be fooled by their 'convenient' internet banking. It means they pay less staff in fewer branches and maximise their profits. It just makes us all more vulnerable to some computer fraudster tricking us out of our money.

Government should legislate that every branch must have at least one dedicated member of staff trained to deal with these sort of situations, someone like a manager, or is that just too old-fashioned?

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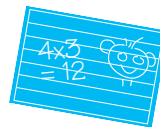


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BREAK TIME

Winners prove they have the write stuff

HALFWAY primary school children in Minster have cleaned up in a Swale writing competition about littering.

Abbie Allen and Fahima Ali, both 10, received prizes for their entries in the litter angels story competition. Aimee Summers and Mya Chisholm, also 10, received certificates of merit.

Each winner received a certificate and £25 worth of book tokens.



Heart DJ Toby asks for Christmas gifts

HAVE a heart and donate a Christmas gift for a needy child is the plea from a well-known radio presenter.

Heart DJ Toby Anstis is encouraging people to donate an unwrapped present which will be then distributed by children's charities across Kent.

He said: "This is a fantastic initiative and is all about giving back through the enthusiasm and generosity of the community."

Your wrapped gifts can be dropped off at branches of Asda.

Sports mentors hope to inspire youngsters

■ BY JILL HURST

WORLD-class athletes are preparing to visit schools across Kent as part of a new nationwide mentoring scheme.

A group of 16 sportsmen and women are taking part in the programme run by the Youth Sport Trust and Sky Sports, which is designed to inspire and motivate young people aged 11 to 16 years old to be the best they can be.

Paralympic wheelchair rugby player Steve Brown was hand-picked to work as a mentor alongside other sports personalities such as boxing champion Darran Langley and sailing expert Joe Glanfield.

Steve said that applying to be a mentor was one of the most nerve-racking experiences of his career.

He said: "I'd been interviewed countless times before but when I turned up for the school mentor interview I was staggered at the quality of sports people who wanted to take part."

"I've never been so nervous. I was thrilled to be selected and I'm

honoured to be taking up the role of mentor.

"The project is designed to inspire children who need help in some aspect of their lives whether that is schoolwork, sports, health or self-esteem. We will work with the teachers, visit the schools and motivate children to do their best and achieve their goals."

"I had a hard time at school and having a positive role model would have made all the difference. If I can influence the lives of children for the better then I will take every opportunity to do so."

"I hope my involvement will encourage young people to follow their dreams to be the best that they can be."

Supported by the department for children, schools and families, it is hoped 2,000 schools and 30,000 young people will register for the scheme by 2012.

Schools, community centres and organisations in Kent that would like to learn more about how to become involved are invited to register their school at www.livingforsport.skysports.com.

INSPIRATION: Paralympic wheelchair rugby player Steve Brown hopes to change children's lives through the scheme



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TALK TIME

TOBY STEELE

The PR manager at The Forum in Sittingbourne talks about how he wants to engage people and raise the centre's profile



Tell us a little bit about yourself:

I am the public relations manager for The Forum. I'm in charge of the majority of events that take place at the centre such as the forthcoming community star award and the Guy Fawkes poetry competition.

The Forum has had a bit of stick recently. Tell us something positive:

The centre has something for everyone: a good-sized supermarket and a great mix of chain and independent stores. It is also home to the amazing Anglo-Saxon finds of the recent archaeological dig.

Why should the community support the centre?

Being such a focal point in the town and a venue that is regularly visited by many people, the centre needs as much support as possible to sustain its position and help existing stores as well as attracting new businesses.

The Forum is involved in many community activities people don't know about – tell us about them:

Every month we try to do an event at centre that engages the community. This may be a competition, or the celebration of people nominated for awards. We are always open to suggestions. Swale is a tight-knit community and we want The Forum at the heart of it.

In December we are inviting people to nominate their Christmas star, a child who has shown great bravery or truly inspired others in 2009.

YOUR LETTERS

Candidates need to find their backbone

The most shocking thing about your front page story last week was the seeming reluctance of any of the major parliamentary candidates to condemn the racist British National Party.

To have shown themselves to have so little backbone so early on in an election campaign hardly bodes well. The people of Swale deserve to be represented by better candidates than these spineless jellyfish.

Steve Armitage, Sittingbourne



Ignoring BNP won't make it go away

Resigned anger doesn't represent much of a stand from our potential political leadership against the openly racist BNP.

Is that all they have to say on the matter?

They would command more attention and respect from the electorate if they actually said



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what they thought, instead of ducking the rather glaring issues of immigration, joblessness and racism in Swale.

Burying their heads in the sand and pretending these issues, and the BNP, don't exist is

simply playing into their hands and giving them a free run at the disaffected electorate the main parties are perennially failing to reach.

I am not very confident that any of the candidates announced

so far are up to the job; let's hope we have some more realistic choices presented to us over the next few weeks.

James Ranmill, Sittingbourne

Our coast with the most a great asset



I want to wish Sheppey Sailing Club all the best in its expansion plans and hope Swale council sees its way to providing all the support it can.

Unfortunately, the borough too often makes little or nothing of its many attributes, and seems a forgotten part of Kent.

This is partly because we fail to make the most of what we have – an interesting, nationally significant history of gunpowder production, smuggling, trade etc, beautiful countryside and a great coastline.

Sheppey Sailing Club raises yet another attribute: the best sailing location in the region.

One has to ask, why aren't we already holding international competitions?

So let's shout about the good things we do have, and make the most of them.

Chris Denton, Swale

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Award Winning Company

I hope this is untrue

I have heard the rumours in Sittingbourne that Morrisons has been employing foreign workers.

I hope the allegations are not true, because otherwise the firm should be ashamed, especially if it is simply a money-driven decision.

We need jobs in Swale and with the BNP baying at the door it is exactly the sort of thing they would grab hold of.

Julie Marsh, Swale

Showing compassion

As Christmas approaches, reindeer are being transported up and down the country to be used as entertainment in parades, Santa's grottoes and other festive events.

Uprooting reindeer from their natural habitat and keeping them in captivity in this way causes significant health and welfare problems, and according to research at the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, is thought to be linked to the recent increase in deaths in young rein-



deer, including seven which died from liver and gut fluke parasites in Shropshire, and another which died from a lung disease on a farm near Winchester. Quite simply, reindeer are not suited to living in the UK.

Animal Aid urges people to be compassionate this Christmas and choose cruelty-free entertainment.

Ashley Owen, Animal Aid

Put Johnson to flight

I was appalled to read London Mayor Boris Johnson is persisting with his Thames Estuary airport idea.

It was only two years ago that an airport plan for Hoo was quashed. Thousands fought hard against this and dedicated three years of their lives to stop it happening.

It would have taken away land that has long been a haven for wildlife, would have been bad for the environment, and could have caused health problems for people living in the area.

What gives Mr Johnson the right to play with people's health and lives and start this up again? This isn't even his area – so keep out.

Does he not remember the ferocity with which people fought against Hoo? They just do not learn.

Mrs C Russell, by email

Our oil-free future

Only the recession has prevented oil prices from continuing to reflect global scarcity.

Soon we will face the prospect of rising oil prices, with a huge impact on transport costs. What does this mean for Kent?

• Railways. We need full electrification over the shortest feasible period.

• Buses. We need electric buses or other non-fossil fuel technologies.

• Investment in foot and cycle routes to help people to adjust.

• Increases in the price of non-local food. Supporting local farmers' markets and shops will become more attractive and their numbers will grow.

• Local services. Demand for services nearer to where people live will grow, including more post offices.

• Decline in air-based tourist travel. Flying will become more expensive, leading to more tourism in Kent and a decline in airport use.

• Electric vehicles. These will appear on our streets, but will be expensive to run until a significant increase in renewably-generated electricity takes place. This will cut levels of air pollution and contributions to greenhouse gases.

Steve Dawe, Kent Green Party

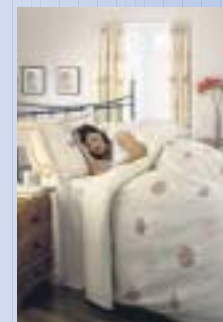
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- 7358 Superking with two Oxford pillowcases

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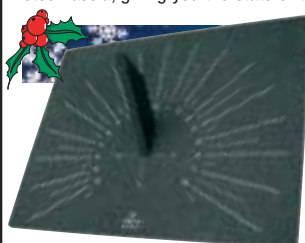
Synchronised to the moon's daily cycle the shortwalk time and tide clock incorporates an innovative and convenient guide to tides.

Simply set the tide hand to your favourite beach or estuary, then throw away your tide table! The hand is synchronised to the moon's daily cycle and rotates every 12 hours and 25 minutes around the hand spun solid stainless steel fascia, giving you the state of the tide at a glance.



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The Evolution II is available in silver for £29.99 and makes a perfect companion for your vacuum cleaner.

Just £29.99

For more information call

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Panto not just for Young Ones

Perennial punk Ade Edmondson plays villainous Captain Hook in panto Peter Pan at the Marlowe Theatre Arena

PETER PAN

Sat, December 5, to Sun, January 17
Marlowe Theatre Arena, Canterbury



THE Marlowe proves that the show always goes on as one of Kent's most popular pantomimes returns.

Despite the Marlowe theatre being closed for a multi-million pound redevelopment, the magic never stops and this year's extravaganza, Peter Pan, will be performed in the Marlowe's state-of-the-art theatre tent.

Comedy icon Ade Edmondson and local legend Dave Lee will be leading the cast in what promises to be one of Canterbury's most unforgettable pantomimes. Produced by the same team who brought last year's Snow White to the Marlowe stage, this is sure to be another fantastic show to entertain all the family.

The 1,250-seater, fully heated and

equipped theatre arena has all the amenities you would expect to find in a regular theatre, from a refreshments kiosk to ample toilets.

With the latest in theatrical sound and lighting equipment, the standard of performance will be just as high as ever and with such a great cast on board, the scene is set for a fantastic festive show.

As a star of The Young Ones and Bottom, Edmondson has become one of this country's best-loved comedians, but fans will see his dark side when he plays the ultimate villain, Captain Hook.

He has also branched out into straight acting, music and writing but it is unlikely that, as an alternative comedian in the 80s, he ever imagined he would one day perform the famous Ghost Bench Gag.

The fairy Tinkerbell will be played with effortless grace by Dave Lee, the comedian from Herne who has been doing plenty of flying this year, so he should be looking forward to taking

to the wing once again. Resplendent in his pink tutu and tasteful make-up, Lee's Tinkerbell is sure to be a vision of beauty.

As Hook's bumbling sidekick Smee, Ben Roddy will have his work cut out to please his villainous master. After training at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art, Roddy starred in a wide variety of theatre shows from Strangers on a Train and Deep Blue Sea to When Did You Last See Your Trousers.

He has also appeared in musicals such as Oklahoma! and The Wizard of Oz, along with television and film work.

Steven Butler and Gemma Sutton also join the cast for this fabulous story about the boy who never grew up.

Ticket prices start at just £10 and performance times vary, so pick up a brochure or visit the website at www.newmarlowetheatre.org.uk to find out more. Book online or call the box office on 01227 787787.



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with
JANE CONNOLLY
Email jane.connolly@kosmedia.co.uk



PEGGY AND PJ

Wednesday, December 2
Chimney Boy, Faversham



FOLK fans are in for a double treat when two true stars visit Faversham next week.

Peggy and PJ will be providing the entertainment at Faversham Folk Club, giving both members and non-members the chance to see these acclaimed artists.

Dave Pegg first got involved in the Birmingham folk scene in the 60s. As a double bass player in the Ian Campbell Folk Group, he met Dave Swarbrick who introduced him to Fairport Convention and he has been with the band ever since.

Not content with one legendary band, Pegg also joined Jethro Tull in 1980 to being a 15-year career with the group. He also set up Wormwood Records, has released a solo album,



become an in-demand session player and co-organises the annual Cropredy Festival.

Little Johnny England front man PJ Wright is a talented vocalist, guitarist and songwriter who has worked with Bobby Vee, Del

Shannon and Steve Gibbons. He is also part of the Dylan Project with Gibbons, Pegg, Simon Nicol and Gerry Conway.

The concert starts at 8.30pm and admission costs £9/£8 and is free for under-18s. Call 01795 536857.

NEW ROPE STRING BAND

Thursday, November 26
Village Hall, Norton



GO along to see the New Rope String band to decide whether they are a folk band or a fabulous music hall act.

While the band seems to defy definition, the one certainty is that they will provide an unforgettable evening of entertainment.

The four talented musicians play acoustic music drawn from traditions around the world, using fiddles, guitar, piano, accordion and anything else they can lay their hands on.

They also sing and dance for their audience's entertainment and manage to raise plenty of laughs too, prompting people to wonder whether they are a real band or a cabaret act.

Peter Challoner and Tim Dalling of the Old Rope



String Band have joined forces with Jock Tyldesley and Vera van Heeringen to bring you exuberant theatrics, rib-tickling comedy and unforgettable music.

The Norton concert, which starts at 8pm, is part of

Applause Rural Touring's autumn programme. Advance tickets, at £6/£4, can be booked on 01795 521581 or admission costs £8/£5 on the door. Find out more about Applause online at www.applause.org.uk.

WYRD SISTERS

Saturday, November 28
Brook Theatre, Chatham



FOR one night only, enter the weird and wonderful world of Terry Pratchett's Wyrdsisters.

Alternate Shadows Theatre Group presents this stage version of the sixth Discworld novel, adapted by Stephen Briggs.

Pratchett's take on Macbeth is one of the hugely successful author's funniest stories and all the novel's best attributes are sure to be translated to the stage in this captivating production.

When the King is murdered by his cousin, three witches – the opinionated Granny Weatherwax, vulgar Nanny Ogg and naive Magrat Garlick – found themselves in possession of the King's crown and a child. The youngster, Tomjon, is



given to a travelling theatre company in the belief that he will one day fulfil his destiny to defeat his father's murderer, Duke Felmet.

A wicked duke, the ghost of a murdered king, time shifts and a land in peril all feature in this thrilling production.

Who can stand between the Kingdom and destruction?

The performance starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £7, concessions available. Call the box office on 01634 338338 or visit the website at www.medway.gov.uk/theatrebooking.



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SWALE LEISURE

No need for hearing aid with the Slug Pixies

GET ready to rock out when the Slug Pixies perform in Sittingbourne later this week.

Formed in 2002, the band's sound has been described as 'rock music for the hard of hearing'. Find out more about them by visiting the website at www.slugpixies.co.uk.

The band will be playing at the Fountain Public House in Station Street on Friday. For more information about the venue call the pub on 01795 472015.

Rock and Indie covers sure to be your thing

FROM Muse to Metallica, Where's My Thing? covers a diverse range of hits from popular rock and indie artists.

The band will be playing at the Four Horseshoes in Headhill Road, Graveney, at 5pm on Sunday. To find out more about the band visit the website at www.wheresmything.co.uk.

Find a place in The Sun for night with Smiler

MUSIC to make you grin is on offer this weekend when Smiler performs at a pub in Bredgar.

The vocal, guitar and drum duo play hits by the likes of Dire Straits, Pink Floyd, Fleetwood Mac, Thin Lizzy and many more.

Smiler can be seen at the Sun Inn in The Street tonight. For more information call the pub on 01622 884221.

Send in your demos to find Band of Bands

THE hunt is on for Kent's best music talent as the 2010 Westcoast Band of Bands Competition opens.

Just 24 bands will be selected to compete at the Margate venue, with £1,000 on offer for the winner.

Send demos and band information to Band of Bands, Westcoast Bar, 3-5 King Street, Margate CT9 1DD by December 31. Demos will not be returned.

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Eat to beat at pub's live cabaret nights

■ Prince of Wales, Hoath

THE village of Hoath is the setting for one of the finest English pubs in the area, which is renowned for both its food and drink.

The Prince of Wales in Maypole Road preserves the traditional pub atmosphere with live music and gourmet evenings – no karaoke or gaming machines spoil the ambience.

Those looking for excellent food know that this is always supplied by the three full-time chefs who provide the very best for the tables.

A candlelit atmosphere and attractive floral displays add to the feeling of warmth which is apparent to all who come to the pub.

Live music, including jazz and opera as well as cabaret evenings, are another attraction.

Owner Marc Perkins has spent four years at the pub. He said: "I have been in the business for 15 years, but I am always looking to improve standards. This is a great pub in an excellent location with opportunity to expand."

"Our staff offer excellent service and the quality of the food and drink is second to none. Families and children are welcome."

The pub is open daily from 11am until midnight and food is available all the time.

The Prince of Wales, Maypole Road, Hoath, near Canterbury CT3 4LN, 01227 860338



CHEF RECOMMENDS

Martins

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Main course: Pork loin, served on an apple and Calvados sauce.
Dessert: Melted Mars bar gâteau
Telephone: 01227 750304

Prince of Wales

Starter: Chilli-stuffed Beef Tomato topped with sour cream
Main course: Spinach, Mushrooms and vegetable tart with Provencale new potatoes
Dessert: Bailey's crème brûlée
Telephone: 01227 860338

See Ho

Starter: Garlic mushrooms, with garlic sauce with salad and crusty bread
Main course: Rack of lamb with creamy mashed potato and seasonal vegetables
Dessert: Apple and blackberry pie
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SPRUCE up your living room with a real, British-grown Christmas tree from Bedgebury National Pinetum and Forest.

From Saturday there will be a large selection available from the Walled Garden between 10am and 4pm and a voucher for a free visit to Bedgebury will be given away with every tree. These will be entered into a prize draw to win a pair of Bedgebury concert tickets.

For more information visit www.forestry.gov.uk/bedgebury.

Rick Stein is cooking things up at Bluewater

TELEVISION chef Rick Stein will be signing copies of his new book at Bluewater next week.

Rick Stein's Far Eastern Odyssey (BBC Books, £25) accompanies his latest television series in which Stein took an epic culinary journey along rivers, through jungles and around coastlines to meet local farmers and learn about the authentic foods of the Far East.

He will be at Waterstone's from 5pm on Monday. Call the store on 01322 624831.

County Square has got xmas all wrapped up

ANYONE who dreads the ordeal of wrapping Christmas gifts can find help at County Square Shopping Centre in Ashford.

Every Saturday until December 19, shoppers can take their purchases to the Santa's Little Helpers gift wrapping team in the lower mall outside Debenhams. The service is available between 10am and 4pm and all costs are donated to Demelza House children's hospice. Visit www.countysquareshoppingcentre.com.

Locally produced soap is the natural choice

WAITROSE is cleaning up with natural handmade soaps from local company, Fentons of Kent.

Company founder Roz Burton is a former IT worker who set up the business just over a year ago, but her products have already become the first local soap to be stocked at her local Waitrose store. If successful, they could be stocked in more stores. Made from completely natural ingredients, the soaps use Nature's own antibacterial and antiseptic plants.

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BUY celebrity fragrances on a recession-friendly budget with Lloydspharmacy's Christmas offers.

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Hamsters play three-set homage to rock legends

BY SIMON ROBINSON

VETERAN rockers The Hamsters are set to perform a one-band triple-header in Gravesend this Friday.

The Essex trio take up all three slots on the bill – appearing as the opening act, second band and headliner.

The hard-working Hamsters open with a set of their original material before following on with two complete covers sets; one paying homage to Jimi Hendrix and the other to long-bearded rockers ZZ Top.

The band's musical versatility has brought them immense popularity and, more importantly, longevity.

Having been on the road for 23 years, the band has notched up more than 4,000 appearances and a 20,000-strong mailing list.

The band's own publicity blurb reveals how the trio survives and why they have been so successful.

It reads: "Originally forming for their own amusement – and taking their name from the Sex Pistols, who once used it as a pseudonym to outwit hostile councils – the Hamsters enjoy the irony of being an aggressive band with a cuddly name."

"Although serious about what they do, they don't take themselves too seriously."

"The Hamsters are established as the UK's premier blues-rock attraction. This has been achieved purely by hard work, with the band handling all their own affairs, thereby disproving the popular misconception that it can't be done without major-label muscle."



CUTE AND FLUFFY: Blues-rockers The Hamsters bring 23 years of gigging experience to the Woodville Halls

"Although primarily performing their own brand of material, they are also widely regarded as our leading interpreters of the music of Jimi Hendrix and more recently ZZ Top."

"Members have performed with artists such as Eric Clapton, Alison Moyet, Doctor Feelgood, Walter Trout and the late, great gentleman of British Blues, Alexis Korner."

For those yet to be convinced of the band's talent, former Formula 1 world champion Damon Hill is among the trio's biggest fans and was even caught sporting an official band T-shirt at the Hungarian Grand Prix.

The Hamsters will play the Woodville Halls on Friday. Doors open at 8pm.

For details, visit www.thehamsters.co.uk.

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SONGSTRESS: Ebony Johnson sings Leonard Cohen's Hallelujah.



CREATIVE: Rockers Kingskin perform Stoner Girl at the Create Festival.



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- 3 The Geoff Everett Band – 4/12 The Royalmail, Lydd
- 4 Stacey And The Freeloaders – 5/12 Leo's Red Lion, Northfleet
- 5 The Flack – 13/12 Westcoast Bar, Margate

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MONEY MATTERS

**A little thought
saves a long way**

Inside your pull-out supplement

- Prepare yourself for the 50 per cent tax
- It pays to read the paperwork
- Being a good sport can pay off
- VAT is back, make sure you're ready
- Consumer legislation is under review
- Consider a greener investment
- Isn't it time the banks made changes?
- Road tax isn't the only financial burden
- Drive your way to bigger savings
- Cars versus bank accounts
- How the scarp page scheme adds up
- The cross-Channel people carrier

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great savings booklets



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what's inside

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Whilst the electorate loved it, not everyone's looking forward to the new 50 per cent tax rate that's due to come in next year, but it doesn't have to be all doom and gloom for those who have to pay

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fortune on advertising when you take up sport sponsorship

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better investment? We take a look at some of the options worth considering

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After an overwhelming response to the Government Scrappage Scheme it's now been confirmed an extra £150m will be added to the pot, which is certainly worth considering, but don't worry if you can't enjoy the offer - there are a lot of great deals out there anyway

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Our friends from across the Channel have proved how successful a van can be converted into a people carrier, and now we're learning to take advantage of the model too

Essential guide to where you can save

■ SCG Construction in Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off all landscaping

■ Old Sawmills furniture store in Ashford is offering 20 per cent off all showroom items

■ The White House hair and beauty salon in Deal is offering a free manicure at the same time as a cut and finish

■ Village Hotel, hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering 50 per cent off leisure club joining fee when you present a voucher available from www.vouchersforkent.co.uk

■ KOS is offering ultra slim Danish Skagen watches for men and women at only £69.99, saving £20 on the RRP

■ Furniture Island in Folkestone is offering an extra five per cent off everything in store every Saturday and Sunday

■ Bannatyne Health Club in Ashford is offering two complimentary personal training sessions with fully qualified instructors if you sign up with Bannatyne Health Club Ashford today

■ Experience the natural comfort, warmth and luxury of a traditional feather mattress with the innovative mattress topper from only £39.99, save over 50 per cent. Various sizes available thanks to KOS offer

■ Maidstone Kia motor dealer in Maidstone is offering 10 per cent off all accessories

■ Secure Style windows doors and conservatories in Herne Bay is offering 30 per cent off conservatories

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Prudence will pay you dividends

CHRISTMAS is going to place its own demands on your bank account and many people are planning to spend less this year.

It is tough and while we are all waiting for any sign that the

recession's over, the priority for both individuals and businesses is to make sure they survive until it's over.

This month in Money Matters there are tips for individuals and ideas for business to make your cash go further.

For you, check out some of the many money-saving offers available

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There are offers for leisure, food and drink; motors and servicing; and retail, trades and services.

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buying over a few months and the vouchers can help.

So why not spend a few minutes flicking through the online booklets, and you may end up being able to tick off a few people from your present list and save yourself money at the same time.

Happy shopping and we wish all of readers well.

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Avoid the January blues with early advice and support

MARK NEWMAN, a partner at newly launched HCW Recovery Solutions LLP, a corporate recovery service introduced through accountants Horwath Clark Whitehill LLP, explains that with the right advice Kent's small and medium businesses (SMEs) can avoid the traditional difficulties of New Year survival

WHILE many businesses may be finding the going tough at the moment, there will be some for whom the Christmas and New Year period brings no festive cheer at all, leaving them facing the prospect of closing.

It's a depressing fact that more businesses fail in the first three months of the year than during any other quarter and this could be especially marked in 2010, as many firms are having to look more closely at how they operate and their cash flow in order to make it through the recession.

Why the seasonal headache? For SMEs, December is often a less productive time because of holidays, sickness and Christmas spirit, but wages still have to be paid during the yuletide break. The added difficulty in securing supplies, getting paid and often in

simply getting work out of the door over the Christmas period means a severe cash crisis could be looming come January.

There's a widespread perception that insolvency is a last desperate resort, but we would always urge businesses to seek advice at an early stage as pre-emptive action can ensure the business continues. Burying your head in the sand can be as damaging for your business as it can with your health. It is far better to undergo minor surgery in order to make a recovery, than to let things drift and discover the prognosis is terminal.

There are also a number of steps SMEs can take to mitigate any nasty surprises which

may be brought about by seasonal difficulties:

- Plan ahead and produce accurate management accounts on which to make sensible business decisions. At the very least, businesses need to determine which creditors, including the taxman, are pressing. And when and how they can be paid.
- Produce accurate cash-flow forecasts so you know where you stand and don't be afraid to talk to suppliers and customers about payment terms. More importantly, be open and honest with your staff.
- If problems loom – look at how you can reduce the gap between in and outgoings.
- Talk to an expert – are your business sys-

tems as efficient as they can be or are you wasting valuable management time and money? Is your business tax efficient too?

- Stay calm. Just because a business comes under pressure from creditors does not mean that, with the right action and advice, it cannot survive.
- The best tool is always planning ahead. If this problem is a regular occurrence at this time of year, a strategy is needed to iron out any cyclical problems. The key is always not to panic, take the right advice and be honest with yourself in making projections and forecasts. Plan for the worst-case scenario and the reality isn't likely to be nearly so bad.

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NEXT year the new 50 per cent tax rate will come into effect for high earners. It was a popular measure with the electorate, but was understandably less well received by those earning more than £150,000 who will be the ones facing the increased contributions.

Those who fall into this bracket should be asking whether their money can work smarter for them. There are many ways to maximise the potential of your earnings and by talking through your position with an Independent Financial Adviser (IFA) it should be possible to see how you can make your money work more efficiently. There are various options, whether it is by being paid in dividends if you own the com-

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Some independent advice could save you a packet



Given how much time directors spend thinking about their company's money, it is surprising how little attention some of them pay to their own finances, says CHRIS WINNING, Managing Partner at Clydesdale Bank's financial solutions centre in Tunbridge Wells

pany, being paid in share options, incorporating yourself as a company if you are self-employed – an adviser can suggest what is best for you.

Clydesdale Bank has two business branches in Kent – Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells – but we also provide private banking solutions and our IFA service is an integral aspect of this. We have been holding a series of briefings in which our local IFAs, who have access to the most appropriate solutions from across the entire financial market, have been providing customers with guidance on the 50 per cent tax rate.

An IFA can also help with making other aspects of your finances more efficient including:

- **ISAs** – Compared to traditional savings accounts, ISAs are a tax-efficient way of saving money. Each year, you can invest up to £7,200 in an ISA. The full amount can be invested in a Stocks and Shares ISA, or you can deposit up to £3,600 in a Cash ISA and the balance in a Stocks and Shares ISA.

- **Inheritance Tax** – Inheritance tax is paid on your total estate – essentially everything you own when you die. This is current-

ly levied at 40 per cent of the value above the current tax-exempt threshold of £325,000 (£650,000 for married couples or civil partners). There are various strategies that can be employed to limit the tax liability of your estate after your death.

- **Pensions** – Depending on your income, you will receive full tax relief from the government on any pension contributions you make, up to £245,000 annually (and up to a maximum of £1,750,000 over your lifetime). If you are a higher rate tax payer, this could prove to be a great way to invest your money tax-efficiently.

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Village Hotel, hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering a free bottle of house wine when you present your voucher at time of booking your office Christmas lunch – minimum table of four to qualify – available from www.vouchersforkent.co.uk

■ KOS is offering a porous seepage hose, so you can save time and money and use up to 70 per cent less water. From only £19.99 save £35 on RRP

■ Northgate Alfa motor dealer in Canterbury is offering air conditioning services for £79.95+vat

■ KOS is offering Severin Electric BBQ. Save £30 on offer price of £149.99, RRP £179.99

■ Baileys Nissan motor dealer in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off MOTs

■ Living Out log cabin store, Chestfield, Maidstone is offering 10 per cent off

■ KOS is offering a £200 saving on the Toyota CB04T Mark II sewing machine only £99.99 inc p&p RRP £299.99

■ Chambers Motorcycles in Maidstone is offering free oil filter when you have your bike serviced in the service department.

■ KOS is offering rechargeable Micro Luggage Scales £19.99

■ KOS is offering the Extreme Bra for £24.99

■ Rustic Summer House Company Ltd in Bearstead Nr Maidstone is offering 10 per cent off for all the stock items

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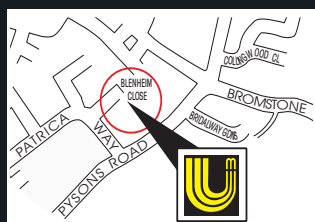
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■ KOS is offering traditional barbeque grill and oven 'smoker bags' for £14.99

■ SCG Construction in Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off all building works

■ Experience the natural comfort, warmth and luxury of a traditional feather mattress with the innovative mattress topper from only £39.99, save over 50 per cent. Various sizes available thanks to KOS offer

■ Wells Clinic in Ashford is offering £25 off removal of skin tags, moles, verrucas, warts, red veins, cysts and skin peels

■ KOS is offering five Global knives set, scissors and block. Only £199.99, saving £150 off the RRP

■ Village Hotel hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering 20 per cent off your bill at Starbucks café with a voucher, please note this offer is only valid at Village Hotel Maidstone – get your voucher from www.vouchersforkent.co.uk

■ KOS is offering a leather organiser handbag by Jane Shilton only £49.99 inc p&p, saving £40 off RRP

■ Northgate Alfa motor dealer in Canterbury is offering fixed-price servicing for cars three years plus. Bronze Care Petrol or Diesel £109

■ KOS is offering luxury Egyptian cotton 400-count percale bed linen. Save up to 40 per cent off RRP

■ True Grip leisure activity centre in Canterbury is offering 15 minutes of karting, £10 on arrive and drive. Sundays only, 10am-2pm

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Business property leases: Forewarned is forearmed

YOU'VE found the ideal new premises for your business, but before signing on the bottom line have you taken a close look at the lease? **Richard Metcalfe** of Metcalfe Stanley Hicks Chartered Building Surveyors, offers an insight into a little understood, but potentially very costly subject 'leasehold dilapidations'.

Everybody who leases a commercial property, regardless of its size or age, needs to understand that unless you take appropriate steps before signing the lease, you will be responsible for repairing the property before you leave regardless of its condition when you first occupy it.

Failing to understand the terms of your lease and its obligations can leave many businesses facing substantial and unwelcome costs at the end of their term.

For example, an occupier of industrial premises wished to vacate one unit and move into another. Naturally anxious to minimise their liabilities on each of the premises, they sought professional advice and settled at £75,000, approximately 50 per cent of the amount claimed on the property being vacated. The new premises had been inadequately refurbished and had a roof nearing the end of its life. After negotiation the landlord completed



SIGN: Know what you are signing up for

the refurbishment to a higher standard and provided a new roof, saving the incoming tenant £65,000 and ensuring a trouble-free period of occupation. In total £140,000 was saved by taking appropriate dilapidations advice.

In the vast majority of cases it is the responsibility of the outgoing leaseholder to repair and reinstate the property before the end of the lease. In the absence of this the leaseholder must compensate the landlord.

Getting the work done can be disruptive to the leaseholder's business and may force them to vacate early. Negotiating a financial sum with the landlord can be difficult and involve substantial legal costs.

Chartered Building Surveyors work closely with legal advisors to negotiate the pitfalls of

dilapidations, ensuring their clients, be they landlords or leaseholders, respectively maximise their gains or minimise their losses when buildings are being vacated.

Too often businesses believe that, as they are leasing rather than purchasing, there's no need for a Building Survey. This is a dangerous misconception and before signing any commercial lease you must obtain proper professional advice and quantify your liabilities. This ensures the true cost of the lease can be measured and contingencies made to avoid unexpected costs when the building is handed back.

As a lease nears its end, landlords also need to take appropriate legal advice and consult a chartered building surveyor. A Schedule of Dilapidations must be prepared and served on the lessee in good time and sufficient detail by an experienced chartered building surveyor practitioner.

If you are the prospective leaseholder the message is: Forewarned is forearmed – consult your chartered building surveyor before you sign the lease, and again in the last year of the lease, so that you may plan your effective exit. The key is not waiting until you receive a Schedule of Dilapidations from your landlord.

• **Metcalfe Stanley Hicks** – www.msh-cbs.co.uk – is experienced in advising both landlords and leaseholders in respect of their liabilities under commercial leases for repair of buildings and in costing disrepair and pursuing claims.

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Enjoy a winning streak with sport sponsorship

By **RODNEY CHAMBERS**

WHEN it comes to building a company's profile, as well as investing in the internet, media relations and advertising, many also look to put their hard-earned cash and name to a sporting endeavour.

One such company is GSE Group, the construction group based in Ashford. It's been a case of 'nothing breeds success like success' thanks to the winning ways of GSE Racing Airwaves Yamaha Superbike team. Over the years motor racing has provided an excellent opportunity for the business to market itself to existing and potential clients.

GSE Racing is the most successful team in British Superbike history, with five championship titles (including the 2009 Championship), countless race wins and a reputation for producing future world champions. Its Airwaves Yamaha team riders, Leon Camier and James Ellison, finished the 2009 season as champion and runner-up respectively.

Darrell Healey, founder and chairman of GSE Group, utilised his passion for motor racing and recognised that performance on track could help promote the business, when he first

put the company name to the GSE Racing team back in 1997.

In addition to the association of success, GSE Group is able to use its sponsorship as a unique opportunity to offer first class hospitality to clients in a thrilling race-fuelled environment. Derek Gilburt, a director at GSE Group said: "At GSE Group, we interpret high quality corporate entertainment as an investment. We aim to differentiate ourselves from competitors and offer face to face time with clients in a relaxed and informal environment".

The construction industry is still a fiercely price driven market and GSE Group recognises the importance of establishing and maintaining both personal and professional relationships with its clients. At a time when many companies are reducing marketing budgets, the GSE Group uses client entertainment as a way of controlling its marketing spend through strategic activity.

Derek Gilburt continues: "Corporate entertainment provides access to a targeted and captive audience. If you're going to invest time and money in a corporate event, it's important to ensure you have the right clients there, and this is much easier in a controlled hospitality environment."

The use of corporate entertainment via the

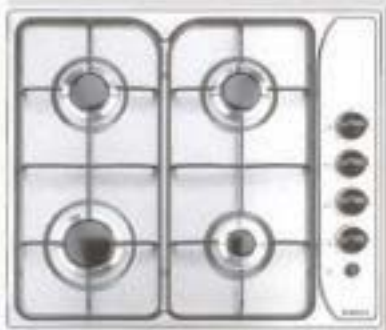
GSE Racing team adds further value to GSE Group by creating a lasting impression with key decision makers. Derek Gilburt added: "When an existing client takes up a new position with a company we've not yet formed a

relationship with, they can provide access to a whole new opportunity. At GSE Group, we know that showing commitment to our clients in the long term has benefits way beyond the chequered flag."



ON TRACK: GSE Group is the name behind the GSE Racing Airwaves Yamaha Superbike Team

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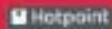
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VAT you need

ALTHOUGH HM Revenue and Customs has a new 45 page guidance document on its website and 13 pages on the anti-avoidance rules, many businesses will need help to understand them during the coming months. If you are in any doubt about the changes, seek specialist advice as early as possible.

HMRC has stated it will not

specifically target change of errors unless there is a loss of revenue, if you do make errors you may have to account for extra VAT you have not charged, plus interest and a potential penalty of up to 30 per cent for not taking reasonable care. By planning early you may be able to improve your own cash flow and help some customers save VAT.

Tax point rules

For any supply of goods or services VAT has to be charged at the so-called 'tax point'.

For goods, the basic tax point is when the goods are delivered or made available. But this is overridden if invoicing or payment occurs earlier. If both occur before the basic tax point it is whichever is the earliest.

Example 1: On December 15 I order a computer to be delivered in mid January. I pay the invoice dated December 15 on the same day. The VAT rate is 15 per cent. Many retailers are likely to promote the 2.5 per cent VAT saving and it will improve their own cash flow.

But there are also special rules which aim to assist mainly large businesses' invoicing and accounting procedures.

Example 2: Goods are handed over to a business customer on December 28, but the invoice follows on January 5 and is paid on February 5. Although the basic tax point is the first event, if the invoice is issued within 14 days that date is treated as the VAT tax point. As it is after December 31



GOING UP: Be prepared for the VAT rate rise in January

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to know about change

On December 1, 2008, there was a lot of confusion when the standard rate of VAT was reduced from 17.5 per cent to 15 per cent. With the rate now due to revert to 17.5 per cent from January 1, 2010, **ALAN BUCKETT**, Head of VAT Services at Maidstone-based DSH Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors, explains the implications

VAT at 17.5 per cent is chargeable. This is unlikely to concern VAT registered customers who can reclaim VAT incurred on business expenditure in full and may be easier for suppliers who invoice within 14 days of supplying goods.

But there are also optional 'change of rate' rules. In example 2, if the customer is VAT registered but is partly exempt, they cannot reclaim all the VAT. If the basic tax point is before January 1 the optional change of rate rules allow the supplier to charge VAT at 15 per cent even though its invoice is issued after December 31.

For services, the tax point depends on the type of service provided.

For a one-off service like repairing a burst pipe over two days, the basic tax point occurs on the day the service is completed. However, if invoicing and/or payment occur earlier, one of those dates, whichever is the earlier, overrides the basic tax point. Unregistered or partly exempt clients may prefer to be invoiced before January 1 for a service to be performed early next year in order to save VAT.

For continuous services, like ongoing legal or accountancy advice which is billed periodically, there is no performance tax point, so invoicing and payment, whichever is the earlier, fixes the VAT tax point.

ing and payment, whichever is the earlier, fixes the VAT tax point.

Example 3: A firm of lawyers provides ongoing legal advice to a VAT registered business which can reclaim all the VAT. It issues an invoice on February 1, 2010 for work carried out between November 1, 2009 and January 31, 2010. It charges VAT at 17.5 per cent.

Example 4: Say the client in example 3 is a private individual. The optional change of rate rules allow the law firm to apportion the work done up to December 31 and charge 15 per cent VAT and then charge 17.5 per cent VAT on the remainder. Can your invoicing systems cope with this?

Anti-avoidance

To prevent connected persons manipulating the change of rate rules, the Government has introduced anti-avoidance legislation. In practice the number of transactions likely to be affected may be minimal.

Essentially, if you answer yes to one or more of the following you should seek specialist advice:

- Is the value of the supply more than £100,000 (excluding VAT)?
- Are the supplier and customer 'connected'?
- Is an advance invoice before January 1

not payable within six months?

- For prepayment arrangements is the supplier, or anyone connected to the supplier, financing the prepayment?

Other issues

The above is only a brief warning on some of the issues to be considered. Different businesses will be faced with specific issues, like those using cash accounting, the flat rate scheme, private fuel scale charges, etc. will need to consider the implications carefully.

Key points

- Consider which of your customers are VAT registered and can reclaim all the VAT you charge them.
- How many of your customers can only recover part of the VAT you charge or none at all? Consider whether you can help these clients save VAT.
- Can your IT and invoicing systems cope with the basic, 14 day and optional change of rate tax point rules?
- Seek specialist advice early. Remember that VAT rules depend on specific and detailed facts so you must provide full information.

For more information call 01622 690666 or e-mail alan.buckett@dsh.co.uk or fiona.ratcliff@dsh.co.uk.

Essential guide to where you can save

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■ Village Hotel, hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering this deal: buy two large glasses of wine and get the rest of the bottle free at the Victory pub

■ Maidstone Kia motor dealer in Maidstone is offering a Lifeshine full car care for £299

■ Oliver Carpets in Ramsgate, Herne Bay and Cliftonville is offering five per cent off when you spend over £250

■ Secure Style, windows, doors and conservatories in Herne Bay is offering 30 per cent off windows and doors

■ Lay Well flooring store in Sittingbourne is offering a free upgrade on underlay

■ Cliftonville tile centre in Cliftonville is offering free adhesive and grout on all tile orders over 15 metres

■ Decorators Choice, supplier of paints and wallpapers in Canterbury, is offering 15 per cent off all paints

■ Wells Clinic in Ashford is offering £50 off skin lifting and tightening. Lines and wrinkle reduction treatment

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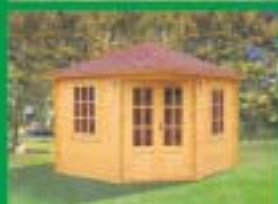
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■ Maidstone Kia motor dealer in Maidstone is offering MOTs for £45

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■ FG Barnes motors in Maidstone is offering MOTs for only £39.99

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

BY JENNIFER EDWARDS

THE European Parliament will debate the Consumer Rights Directive later this month, completing a review of consumer rights across the European Union which has already resulted in the Provision of Services Regulations 2009 and the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

The Directive aims to provide a uniform set of consumer rights across the EU by granting consumers a minimum level of contractual rights and remedies whilst retaining the general principles of contract law in each member state. Existing sector-specific legislation will prevail over the generic standards. The ultimate aim is to encourage consumers to buy goods across the EU.

Changes which favour UK consumers include: the right not to pay any additional charges not notified to them at the outset; a longer cooling-off period of 14 days; the right to a refund within seven days (currently 30 days) for late or non-delivery and the right to require a price reduction or refund in certain circumstances.

Changes which favour UK businesses include: the right, when a customer cancels the contract, to withhold reimbursement until the goods have been returned (currently, a refund within 30 days is required); the right to refuse a refund for minor defects and a reduction in the statutory liability period for defective goods from six years to two years (one year for second-hand goods).

Service providers looking to expand into the EEA (other than in sectors such as financial services, transport and healthcare) will benefit from a streamlined process when the Provision of Services Regulations 2009 come

The changing landscape of consumer legislation



REVIEW: The European Parliament will debate the Consumer Rights Directive this month

into force at the end of next month. A single point of contact will be established in each country (for example, Business Link in the UK) to deal with enquiries and applications to trade in that country. Consumers will benefit from a single online advice service in each country. The Regulations encourage co-operation between regulatory bodies across the EEA, particularly in relation to businesses which pose a danger to the environment, public health and/or safety and introduce new sanctions. However, the Regulations also add to, rather than consolidate, the existing lists of information which businesses must provide to customers.

The Consumer Protection from Unfair

Trading Regulations 2008 create an EU-wide list of commercial practices which are unfair if they affect a consumer's decision and a black-list of 31 banned practices. The Regulations apply to all consumer contracts but may also affect contracts between businesses which have a close connection with consumers - for example, a distribution agreement where the end-user is a consumer. The Regulations encourage the free-flow of information across the EU, particularly in relation to enforcement action. The OFT now has the right to request that its equivalent body in, say, France takes enforcement action against a French company which has breached the Regulations in relation to a consumer located in the UK. The OFT also has additional investigative powers and can, for example, inspect goods without a warrant.

Surprisingly, or perhaps as a result of the scale and nature of the changes, the OFT has stated that it wishes to encourage self-regulation where it is more appropriate than enforcement or intervention. To this end, the OFT has set up the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme and the Local Authority Assured Trader Scheme Network. In addition, the OFT will support industry-based schemes which require a higher standard of compliance than the legal minimum but will not give formal approval or guarantee a "safe harbour".

As with all new regulation, the hope is that the benefits will outweigh the additional administrative and legal burden, but it remains to be seen whether cross-border buying increases significantly as a result.

• **Jennifer Edwards is from Thomson Snell & Passmore**

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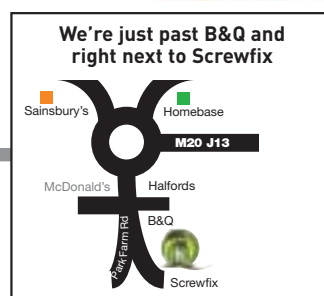
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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Can you make

By JEREMY GATES

ALTHOUGH Prime Minister Gordon Brown thinks next month's Copenhagen Climate Change Summit could save the planet, others are thinking more about the potential benefits from investing in the growing 'Green' agenda.

With National Ethical Investment Week ending on November 14, that concept has been to the fore. New figures show that the amount held in ethical funds – which invest only in companies deemed to help and protect the environment – has soared from £1.5 billion a decade ago to around £7b today.

The first ethical managed fund, F&C Asset Management's Stewardship Growth, celebrated its 25th anniversary this summer. It manages £2.4b of ethical investment in four funds.

Many people probably have part of their pension pots in leading ethical funds including Jupiter Ecology (market cap £307 million), BlackRock New Energy (£106m) and Schroders Global Climate Change Fund (£20m), which launched in 2007.

A special poll by YouGov, carried out for this week's campaign, reveals that 49 per cent of savers want to 'make a difference' – and make money – from ethical investments. The survey also found the 55-plus age group is keenest to back the green agenda, both when they save and when they spend.

But even with nearly 100 green and ethical funds to choose from, only 8 per cent of investors hold a green financial product.

"Investors are starting to see how they can

profit from the shift to a more sustainable world, as events like Copenhagen lift sustainability issues up the political and media agendas," says George Latham, head of socially responsible investment at fund manager Henderson New Star.

"There is growing interest from investors in themes that provide solutions to sustainability changes, including water management and education, alongside more traditional green investment themes such as cleaner energy and sustainable transport."

In theory, as green regulations force consumers to spend more on measures to cut energy bills, the case for long-term green investment – either in managed funds, or shares like waste specialists Biffa (now taken private) and Shanks – looks a no-brainer.

"Large numbers of people are putting their money where their mouth is and doing their bit to create a sustainable future," says Penny Shepherd, chief executive of UKSIF, the sustainable investment and finance association promoting NEIW.

"There are simple steps

you can take to apply these principles to your pension, ISA and other investments."

That's the theory. But finding successful ethical investments isn't always easy.

When M&S launched an Ethical Fund in 2007, I fixed a £75 monthly direct debit. Thirty months on, my holding is worth £200 less than the total paid in, so my cash would have done better in a building society.

Green shares are even harder to fathom: Newcastle-based Eaga is an obvious beneficiary in the fight against climate change, because it turns over £750m a year making homes more energy efficient to meet the Government target of cutting carbon emissions by 25 per cent by 2020.

As many bills for this work are paid by public-sector grants, Eaga looks pretty recession-proof. Yet its shares – which cost 181p each in June 2007, when the company floated – changed hands this



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Mon 7th	Afternoon Cite Europe	£13.00
Thur 10th	London Christmas Lights & Sights	£16.00
Sat 12th	Thursford Christmas Spectacular	£58.00
Sun 13th	Lille Christmas Markets	£33.00
Sat 19th	Christmas at Disneyland Paris	£60.50
Sun 20th	Calais Christmas Markets	£19.50

January

ADULT

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money going green?

week at 143p. All 5,000 Eaga employees are shareholders, with other shares held mainly by big institutions.

Andy Parsons at The Share Centre isn't surprised by this.

"All sorts of green ideas and environmental initiatives are discussed at top level," he says, "But you must remember that their impact on everyday life is still fairly limited."

"People are slowly changing their habits and their consumption patterns, but it is only when these changes become dramatic that you will see really significant growth in earning patterns flowing through to companies, and to the funds which invest in them."

Another recent problem for ethical funds is that they won't hold shares in oil, mining and tobacco companies – which have driven this year's rally on the London market.

Because investing in the green revolution is so complex, most people ask a specialist financial advisor to suggest a suitable fund.

Recommendations by The Share Centre include: Allianz Global Eco trends, a £19m fund run by Bozena Jankowska focusing on alternative energy sources, energy efficiency and environmental quality; Jupiter Ecology; and Schroder Global Change.

At the F&C Stewardship International Fund, which delivered a 21 per cent return in the past year, fund manager Terry Coles attributes his recent success to the decision to expand ethical investing techniques beyond the "traditional stomping ground" of the US and Britain to fast-growing emerging markets, notably Asia and Latin America.

Impax is a smaller fund manager, holding £1.4b of investors' money, but its expertise in

the ethical sector is widely accepted.

"The environmental sector offers better growth and returns than the mainstream economy and is therefore a smart place to allocate funds, whether you are ethically motivated or not," says Ian Simm, manager of the Impax Environmental Markets fund.

Impax has successfully identified fast-growing companies in renewable energy, water treatment, energy efficiency and environmental consultancy. One of its major investments is Vestas, a Danish maker of wind turbines.

In five years, Impax Environmental Markets Fund has turned £100 into £161. Last month, Impax raised £104.5m to launch a new Asian Environment Markets investment trust to tap the potential of the Asia-Pacific.

"The big difference is that in the last big recession in the early 1990s, companies focused on environmental operations were seen as a luxury which a struggling economy couldn't really afford," says Simm.

"Now environmental issues are at the centre of fiscal stimulation policy, and how to get the economy kickstarted again in the next couple of years."

"If Copenhagen achieved no agreement at all, it would be a negative signal to the energy efficiency business. I have little doubt some useful agreement will emerge in due course, if not within the first two days."

On past form, however, nobody invests in ethical funds for a quick profit, or high annual income. Mostly they pay minimal dividends, so investors must be convinced they will see a decent capital gain over the medium to long-term as new technology moves into the mainstream.



LONG TERM INVESTMENT: Green investments are increasingly an option for savers

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Big bailout, but little change to services



As billions more pounds of taxpayers' cash has been pumped into Britain's ailing banks, holders of more than 40 million current accounts might hope that the management of their financial affairs is about to be transformed.

Surely, we must get something for all that money? As the Government stumps up another £33.5 billion, the bailout bill for Royal Bank of Scotland and Lloyds Banking Group soared to £76b – and the total 'bank rescue' bill hit £20,000 for every person in Britain.

In this latest deal, forced through by the European Union, about 1,000 bank branches could change hands, profitable insurance companies like Churchill and Direct Line must be sold by RBS – and ancient names could return, such as Williams and Glyn's Bank.

Lloyds's hapless shareholders, who have lost millions since the bank's disastrous 'rescue' of HBOS in autumn 2008, must stump up another £21b in the biggest rights issue of all time with no chance of a dividend before 2012.

Meanwhile, out of the wreckage could step Tesco Bank, and maybe a Virgin Money Bank too, if somebody finds the cash while Sir Richard Branson's team adds marketing fizz.

By **JEREMY GATES**

Their first target? Maybe the £2.65b charges on unauthorised overdrafts that the Office of Fair Trading thinks form too big a part of £8b profits made on current accounts each year.

Most bank customers, however, will see little immediate benefit from this upheaval, says Annie Shaw at CashQuestions.com.

"Customers of existing banks, whether under new ownership or not, are unlikely to see any change in the trend towards higher – if more transparent – charges, cautious lending and the gradual ending of free current-account banking," she says.

Kevin Mountford, head of banking at money supermarket.com, says more competition generally heralds a better deal for consumers, so new entrants to the market would be welcome.

But a moneysupermarket.com survey reveals only four per cent of consumers would trust a supermarket brand to look after their finances, and only 10 per cent would expect better service from a supermarket than a bank. Only a quarter said they would take out a credit card with a supermarket brand.

Mountford thinks the best thing to emerge could be a simpler, faster service when switching accounts: "The way you are shoehorned

into an organisation that you don't like must be changed. We need a healthy switching environment which allows people to move freely.

"I think Tesco, which already offers a range of financial services, will do something soon. They might not wait for an asset sale, which could take three or four years to unfold.

"Any new entrants in the marketplace will have to do something which sets them apart, in product innovation or service standards – maybe branches opening 8am-8pm."

Andrew Hagger at Money.net.co.uk believes fresh blood is needed in the banking sector, with simple well-priced products, to give customers better choices.

"Customers don't want to continually chase best-buy rates or have to try to figure out pitfalls hidden deep in terms and conditions of ever-more complex accounts," he says.

Innovation

"High Street banking giants have got used to having it their own way, and have got more complacent as competition has dwindled.

"Innovative new players who can balance shareholder and customer expectations have a window of opportunity to convince millions of consumers that they represent a credible banking alternative, one worth switching to."

Of course, nobody really knows how fast the

changes in retail banking will come along.

Meanwhile, savvy bank customers – particularly the two-thirds who stay in credit each month – can find better value accounts by sifting through those already available, mostly outside the banks in distress.

"Consider how you use your account – are you in credit or in the red? From there, you can find a best buy," says Hagger.

Nationwide's Flexaccount, for example, has attractions for first-time buyers because Britain's biggest building society is offering 90 per cent mortgages to account holders. The Flexaccount debit card slashes the cost of purchases and cash withdrawals abroad, and is much cheaper than rivals, even after a one per cent charge outside Europe imposed this year.

Hagger also tips Halifax Reward account as a best buy for those in credit.

"There is a £5 credit paid in every month when you pay in a minimum £1,000, and no charges if you stay in the black," he says.

"Once in the red, you are clobbered: if your overdraft is under £2,500, the charge is £1 a day. Over £2,500, it's £2 a day and any unauthorised borrowing is £5 per day."

The theme runs through most best-buy accounts: millions who stay in the black accept a poorer service than they could find elsewhere, if they bothered to look.

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Road tax gains not that great yet

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WHATEVER you do, don't trade-in your car just to win back a few pounds a year on road tax.

If the car is reliable and not ridiculously thirsty then it is just not worth saving up to £185 a year on the maximum rate for a car registered before March 1, 2001, by downsizing to a newer, dearer lower emission model.

If it is a newer car then there is every chance you will take a major hit on depreciation that cannot be recouped by road tax and fuel benefits.

On the other hand, if you are making the decision for a number of reasons – lower insurance, more convenient size or body style, social conscience as well as cheaper tax and fuel bills – then maybe it is time to fall in with the Government's drive to tax 'gas guzzlers' off the road.

The tax penalties could have been worse, to be fair, if Chancellor Alistair Darling had not relented after seeing that the gloom of recession

THINK ABOUT IT: There are more costs to a car than road tax for you to consider

sion might have sparked a roads revolt by hard-pressed motorists.

But Labour – and a Conservative government is unlikely to be different due to environmental worries – has said it will continue to drive down vehicle sizes and emissions by using tough VED (Vehicle Excise Duty) rates, based on CO₂ emissions rather than fuel consumption and applying them to cars registered after 1 March 2001.

Inconsistent emissions data on older cars means these are taxed simply at £120/year up to 1,549cc and then £185 if larger – something of a bargain for owners of older 'gas guzzlers' if they can bear higher fuel bills or cover relatively fewer miles.

Alternatively, they can opt for a £1,500-2,000 LPG (liquid petroleum gas) conversion, which should then halve their fuel costs – filling stations offering LPG have become increasingly common.

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ECO DRIVE: Sharply-styled models like the Vauxhall Insignia ecoFLEX and Chevrolet Cruze will cut running costs, but being more savvy behind the wheel can protect your wallet too

Drive smart – smart savings

BUYING a new car to save on tax, fuel, insurance and overall running costs must be just part of a motorist budget review.

The next stage involves smarter driving and journey planning and getting fitter by walking and cycling instead of using the car on short journeys – cold engines waste fuel and produce 60 per cent more emissions than warm ones.

Short hops also mean extra servicing and more engine wear. If you must drive, follow these tips from the Institute of Advanced Motorists and RAC Foundation:

- Plan your route to save strain on car and driver. Take the most direct route – a sat nav can help – and go off peak if possible. Commuters should try car sharing, Park and Ride bus schemes or other public transport.
- Have your vehicle serviced regularly. Neglected engines waste at least ten per cent more fuel and catalytic converters only clean emissions when properly maintained.
- Check tyres – under-inflated ones need replacing more often (itself an environmental problem), are dangerous and waste fuel. Check pressures weekly.
- Obey speed limits to save money and stay legal. Feather the throttle as you reach cruise-

ing speed; 56mph uses 25 per cent less fuel than 70mph and a smoother driving style saves 'juice' too.

- Accelerate briskly without racing the engine; pulling away too fast uses up to 60 per cent more fuel. Intelligent gear changes at modest engine speeds can save up to 15 per cent in fuel.
- Remove roof racks and carriers when not in use and keep windows closed to avoid drag and wasted fuel. Remove unnecessary and heavy boot luggage and wide wheels and tyres that add rolling resistance. Air conditioning costs fuel too, so try to use the cabin fan and vents unassisted.

• Buy green fuel and use less. Look for low sulphur 'city' diesel or cleaner petrol (low sulphur/aromatics). Consider converting to LPG (liquid petroleum gas) – it's half the price of petrol and cleaner.

- Think ahead – there is no point rushing and then having to brake suddenly.
- Be a tank miser. Why fill the tank to the brim and burn more fuel carrying more weight than necessary?
- Stuck in traffic? Turn off the engine to save fuel and emissions.

• **For more eco tips take a look at Julie Maddocks' online video report at: www.yourkenttv.co.uk/community.**



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How best to save – buy a new car or bank the cash?

RECESSION-hit Brits are saving more despite weak interest rates, but is this sensible for those who need to run a car?

Might it be better to take advantage of near desperation discounts in the car showrooms – especially in the trade's 'dead zone' either side of Christmas – and liberate low yield savings in search of one of the many new car bargains around the moment?

Even better, if you have a ten-year-old car costing a lot to run then you can still apply for the Government-sponsored £2,000 Scrappage grant. Against a small car, that two grand saving is a hefty discount, but the discounts on bigger models can be greater with or without a Scrappage banger to trade in.

Okay, a car costs thousands with or without the discount, but it will take years to earn four figure sums from banking at the rates offered now and for some time to come.

And you can make further savings after driving off the forecourt too by downsizing and opting for a model incurring lower road tax, fuel bills and other running costs.

Even if, after raiding the bank account and waving your 'wad' at the car salesman, your cash does not stretch to the discounted asking price, there are other deals that can be factored in, such as zero or low rate finance.

A generous warranty of up to seven years is also worth having. And be cheeky – ask for trimmings like a tank of fuel, car mats or



A GOOD SAVING:
Chic, eco-friendly and well-priced – the Mazda2 mounts a strong savings argument against leaving your cash in the bank

discounts on any add-ons you might fancy.

But do ensure you are not buying a car on 'run out', where production or importing ceased a while ago. Choose the engine carefully too; with fuel prices volatile, you don't want to trade one gas guzzler for another.

Buy wisely and your new vehicle could save you a fortune, even on depreciation, though cars always devalue.

You can also afford to congratulate yourself for offloading something less efficient in favour of a modern, more eco-friendly model.

On the other hand, you might have lost tons already on that big 4x4, but do work out what it will cost you to run it for the next

three years – it might be a lot less than the cost of chopping it for a new car.

Road tax also favours downsizing – gas guzzlers face £950 a year road tax from next year – but it is still a relatively small part of the motoring budget for most of us.

Many superminis sit in the lowest tax band of £35 a year and though you might be tempted by tax-exempt diesel and hybrid models, check the price. The 'eco star' might save £105 in road tax over three years, but you will pay more upfront.

So, check out the conventional equivalents and don't dismiss petrol; it is still cheaper and makes sense for lower mileage users.

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Bourne Road motor dealer in Crayford is offering free tank of fuel with all Mazda purchases new and used

■ Robins and Day motor dealer in Maidstone is offering MOTs for £29.99 and a service and MOT from £119.99

■ Motorline Renault motor dealer in Canterbury, Ashford and Maidstone is offering £99 service and free MOT for vehicles three years and older

■ Truegrip off-road fun in Canterbury is offering 15 minutes of karting for only £10

■ UK Stone stone merchant in Hersden near Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off Sandstone and limestone list price

■ Robins and Day motor dealer in Rochester is offering MOTs for £29.99 and a service and MOT from £119.99

■ Chambers Motorcycles in Maidstone is offering a free lock when you purchase a bike instore

■ SCG groundworks in Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off landscaping

■ FG Barnes Motors in Maidstone is offering half price MOT with full service

■ Bannatyne Health Club in Ashford is offering memberships from as little as £29 a month

■ UK Stone stone merchants in Hersden nr Canterbury is offering 10 per cent off sandstone spheres

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Scrappage strikes all the right notes with car buyers

BY **STEVE LOADER**

AFTER a top up at the Labour Party Conference, the Government's £2,000-a-go Scrappage incentive should have enough gas in the tank to last the pace.

Enthusiasm was so great though, that the original £300 million fund set aside to last until March 2010 looked woefully inadequate until Business Secretary Lord Mandelson confirmed a further £150m would be added – enough to finance a further 100,000 deals on top of the 200,000 already signed.

The offer is that the donor car or van going to the crusher must have been registered before 31 August 1999 and the owner's name must have been on the V5 'logbook' for 12 months before the date he or she places their new car order.

Carmakers have mostly embraced the deal after initial disappointment that they would be expected to foot half of each '£2,000 Government Scrappage grant' and noting the Treasury would claw back some money through VAT on each car sale anyway.

Some brands have even put extra money on the table on top of their £1,000 per unit as well as extra specification and zero per cent finance – though this is not the greatest lure when interest rates are so low.

On the other hand, consumers with bank



SMALL SAVERS: Nissan's British-built Micra supermini has been a major beneficiary of the successful Government Scrappage scheme and the trend towards downsizing

savings know they are receiving precious little return and may be tempted by a psychological boost from buying a new motor that should be cheaper to fuel and tax.

And don't be despondent if you're not in a position to take advantage of Scrappage; with the exception of city cars and superminis, you should get a hefty discount on most new cars in the current climate without needing to have a banger to scrap.

If you have been out of the car market for a

while though, do your research; diesel cars now outsell petrol, but cost more and the extra weight can be wearing and intrusive in the smaller cars most in demand now and you must drive many miles to recover that extra upfront outlay. Meanwhile, petrol is making a comeback with lighter, small capacity turbocharged engines.

You might also consider a hybrid, but these cost more and this must also be weighed against the mileage you intend to cover.

Essential guide to where you can save

■ Northgate Alfa motor dealer in Canterbury is offering fixed-price servicing for cars three years plus. Silver Care Petrol or Diesel £139

■ KOS is offering the Doro 338 GSM Big button mobile phone for £99.99

■ Village Hotel hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering free loaded nachos worth £5.95 when you buy a bucket of six Mexican Sol beers from the Victory pub

■ KOS is offering the Pulsar Military Style Chronograph Watch. Save £20. Offer price £49.99, RRP £69.99

■ FG Barnes motors in Maidstone is offering £250 of accessories with Network Q purchases

■ KOS is offering Peers Hardy leather handbag and free umbrella for £19.99

■ Robins and Day motor dealer in Canterbury is offering MOTs for £29.99 and service and MOT from £119.99

■ Truegrip off-road fun in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off a 4X4 off-road driving experience

■ KOS is offering solar powered bird baths. Save £30. Offer price £119.99 RRP, £149.99

■ Village Hotel hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering a free day pass when you call into village leisure club and exchange your voucher – available from www.vouchersforkent.co.uk

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Vehicle shown features mica paint available at extra cost of £325. 3 years/30,000 miles full service package at an optional cost of £249. Available at participating retailers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offers. Savings against current man. rec. price and available on UK supplied vehicles ordered and registered before 31st December 2009. Prices correct at time of press. (Chev79242). Scrappage Allowance subject to eligibility, please ask for terms and conditions.

BY **STEVE LOADER**

DOWNSIZING is the buzzword with cash-strapped UK car buyers so supermini sales are soaring, but what if you can't squeeze the family into one or you simply need more room?

The French have the answer in the form of cheap and capacious van-based MPVs.

These might look like Postman Pat styled them and Bob the Builder did the road testing, but their origins are more to do with family needs in the vast rural hinterland across the Channel.

The simple format was to take a small van with sliding rear side doors and add seats and huge windows, creating an MPV thousands of pounds cheaper than a 'proper' people carrier.

Being vans, they were also offered with tried and trusted – and economical – diesel engines. Having succeeded beyond their wildest dreams and frontiers though, French manufacturers have also gone a stage further and designed the current generation to handle far better than before.

The latest Peugeot Partner Tepee – also sold by Citroën as the Berlingo Multispace – is based on the company's 308 car, so there is less of a drunken sailor's gait on corners than its predecessor.

And Renault has just launched the second generation version of its hugely successful Kangoo – rhymes with 'can do' – also based on a car platform, in this case the marque's posh Scenic, so you get a chassis designed for the people carrier task at a much lower price.

Italy's Fiat has got in on the act and jointly builds a smaller van-based MPV version known as the Qubo, along with Peugeot (Bipper Tepee) and Citroën (Nemo Multispace) and even this has car-based underpinnings from its own Grande Punto supermini.

The immediate appeal of these cars is easy access to the box-shaped rear thanks to those

The cross-Channel recession-busters



PREVIOUS LIFE: Peugeot's Partner Tepee, top, and the Renault Kangoo are just two of the many more affordable van-based people carriers to have started crossing the channel

sliding doors. Unlike many MPVs there is also still a massive boot behind the rear seats, which can usually be folded and arranged in various settings for maximum flexibility.

A big lift up tailgate doubles as a rain shelter or shade when picnicking or 'grandstanding' at events.

The headroom is almost ridiculously lofty and you can buy many of these cars specc'd up with airliner-style overhead lockers, though the sporty often use this extra space for stowing fishing rods, skis, mountain bikes and other gear and, of course, a spot of removals for Aunt Gladys' new flat is no big deal – in another life, they were vans.



Essential guide to where you can save

■ Village Hotel, hotel and leisure club in Maidstone is offering a free bottle of house wine when you present your voucher at time of booking your office Christmas lunch before November 1 – minimum table of four to qualify – available from www.vouchersforkent.co.uk

■ KOS is offering a porous seepage hose, so you can save time and money and use up to 70 per cent less water. From only £19.99, save £35 on RRP

■ Northgate Alfa motor dealer in Canterbury is offering air conditioning services for £79.95, plus VAT

■ KOS is offering Severin Electric BBQ. Save £30 on offer price of £149.99, RRP £179.99

■ Baileys Nissan motor dealer in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off MOTs

■ Living Out log cabin store, Chestfield, Maidstone is offering 10 per cent off everything

■ KOS is offering a £200 saving on the Toyota CB04T Mark II sewing machine, only £99.99 inc p&p, RRP £299.99

■ Chambers Motorcycles in Maidstone is offering free oil filter when you have your bike serviced in the service department

■ KOS is offering rechargeable micro luggage scales £19.99

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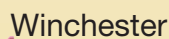
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Model shown may have optional extras available at an extra cost. 3 Years OE Finance available with 20% minimum deposit. Finance by GMAC UK plc. Applicants must be aged 18 or over. Finance offer available at participating retailers. UK registered vehicles only. To be eligible for the Corsa Free Insurance offer Corsa SXi drivers must be aged between 19-35 and will need to have held a full UK/EU driving licence for at least 2 years. A compulsory excess of £250 will apply. Please note that additional excesses do apply in respect of young drivers and modifications. Vauxhall Motor Insurance is underwritten by Prudential Insurance plc, authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Free insurance in Northern Ireland is underwritten by AXA Insurance Limited, regulated by the Financial Services Authority and obliged to comply with the FSC rules issued by the Financial Services Authority. The free redundancy cover is optional and is offered to customers who take out a finance agreement with Vauxhall from a participating FSA-authorised retailer. The cover, which is subject to eligibility, is for the first 36 months of the finance agreement (excluding the first 90 days), and is up to a maximum of 12 months' pay. Terms and Conditions apply. Please refer to the further details of cover. The insurance is provided by Prudential Insurance Company Limited. Other providers of redundancy cover are available. For more information see www.vauxhall.co.uk/corsa. £2000 Government Scrappage Allowance is dependent on the vehicle meeting the full Government Scrappage Allowance criteria. All other sales categories are excluded. Offers may not apply to all Retailer stocks. Offers apply to selected new vehicles ordered or registered between 02/10/09 and 02/12/09, and are subject to status, eligibility, terms and conditions.

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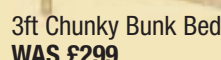
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YOUR TV REVIEW

■ BY ED HILL

DEFYING GRAVITY
BBC Two, 11.10pm, Saturday
THE X FACTOR
ITV 1, 8pm, Saturday

DEFYING Gravity, being shown on BBC Two on Saturday nights, is the latest TV trip into space.

Set 50 years in the future, it tells the tale of eight astronauts on a mission to Venus and other planets in the solar system.

It's an odd programme; the action continuously flips from the crew's current mission to five years before when they all began training. It's not exactly action-packed, either.

These space pioneers are not like trigger-happy warriors of Battlestar Galactica, but a load of self-obsessed naval-gazers.

If these people are what Nasa believes have the right stuff in 2058, they must have decided to use whinge-power as a way of travelling through the depths of outer space.

However, it does have some things going for it. The effects are good and the cast do a decent job of creating a sense of tension, but I can't help feeling that the series, like the characters, doesn't know where it's going.

Is it just a soap opera set in space, or an examination of man's need to explore, whatever the consequences?

It seems concerned mainly with the characters' relationships with each other than with any high concepts.

If I want to see that, I don't have to go to the moons of Saturn – I can pop down to Albert Square.

And so to another soap opera of sorts – The X Factor.

We're down to the business end of the competition now, with just a few weeks until we have to endure a turgid Christmas single, which will doubtless top the charts over yuletide.



BORED-LY GOING: Christina Cox stars in BBC Two's uninspiring sci-fi drama Defying Gravity

It's been an interesting year, if not one high on talent, but it really is impossible to escape this TV monster.

Even my mum, who is much more of a Strictly person, is aware of the 'Jedward' phenomenon, which has probably been the biggest talking point of the series.

I expect that Olly guy will win, as half the female population of this country seem to have fallen in love with him, but whether he has the talent to sustain a high-profile career in the mould of Leona Lewis is doubtful.

Stacey Solomon probably has a chance, too. She can hardly string a sentence together but, to be fair, the girl can belt out a tune.

However, I expect this year's winner will go the way of X Factor's previous winners like Steve Brookstein and Leon Jackson and become a household name, if only in their own household.

Fame is such a fickle business.

YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)

YOU need to have a more realistic attitude about work. At some point you'll have to sacrifice your values in order to earn a living. If that means pretending to agree with a policy you detest, so be it. Resist the urge to tell such people what you really think of their antics.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762



TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)

CHARM won't get you very far with an exacting boss. If you want to get into their good books you need to work hard and stay disciplined. A tough work assignment could be entrusted to you. By bringing this project in under budget you'll put yourself in line for a promotion.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753



LEO (Jul 24-Aug 23)

YOU may not get a lot of sympathy from family. Relatives could accuse you of being your own worst enemy – and maybe they're right. Instead of asking for help, try getting yourself out of trouble. Set a deadline by which to pay off debts. It sounds boring, but your respectability will soar.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)

YOU may be giving people too much credit for being honest. Take some basic security precautions in order to protect your interests. Keep your personal information under lock and key to avoid identity theft, and install security systems to protect your home and car.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759



PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)

YOU'RE too easily defeated when it comes to pursuing your dreams. If you encounter an obstacle, hang on and pray for help. It could come quite unexpectedly. Teaming up with a male colleague will help you cut through work like a hot knife through butter.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763



GEMINI (May 22-Jun 22)

YOU may lack the training to get the kind of job you want. Unfortunately, it may not be possible to get the type of qualifications you need right now. Your best bet is to capitalise on your creative talent. You could find some great clients through a business or romantic partner.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754



VIRGO (Aug 24-Sep 23)

DON'T take your job for granted. You may not be able to get off work early or take the vacation time you wanted. Instead of getting angry accept the verdict and do your best. These days, finding work is no small task. If you are unemployed, you might want to launch a home-based business.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)

MEAN what you say and say what you mean or people will accuse you of being a hypocrite. Youngsters are especially vulnerable to betrayal. If you go back on a promise it will be impossible to regain their trust. Your reputation could grow by leaps and bounds.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760



ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)

A TALENTED teacher could inspire you to further your education. Let a loved one relieve you of responsibilities while you pursue a cherished dream. Although you hate being beholden to anyone, there's nothing wrong with accepting favours from your nearest and dearest.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752



CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 23)

AN intimate relationship is showing signs of strain. You feel as if you're doing all the giving, while your partner never returns the favour. It's time to adjust the balance of power. Your well-being is undergoing a radical improvement, mostly because your home life is so satisfying.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755



LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)

THE party is over, and the sooner you realise it the better off you will be. Scale back on the fun and games so you can focus on work. If that means cancelling a date, so be it. Your attitude will win the confidence of customers who want to be treated with courtesy and respect.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)

DON'T overestimate your power to make money. Although you haven't had much trouble earning cash, you need to put some away for a rainy day. Be ready to refuse a friend a loan or your relationship could be torn apart. Working behind the scenes will win your boss's approval.

• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

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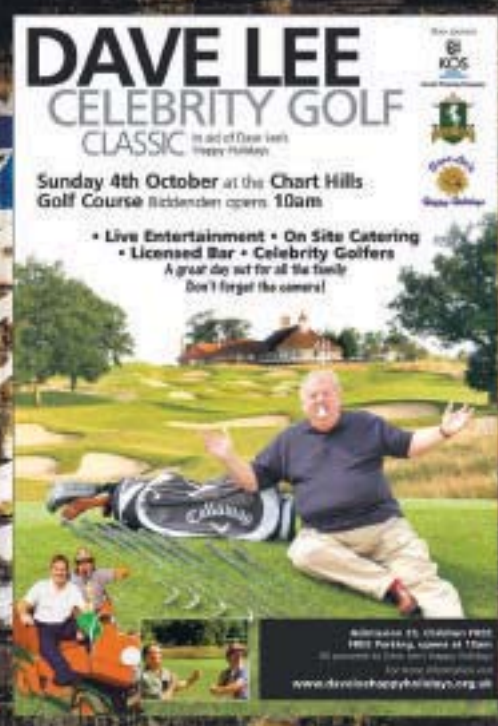
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CRYPTIC CLUES

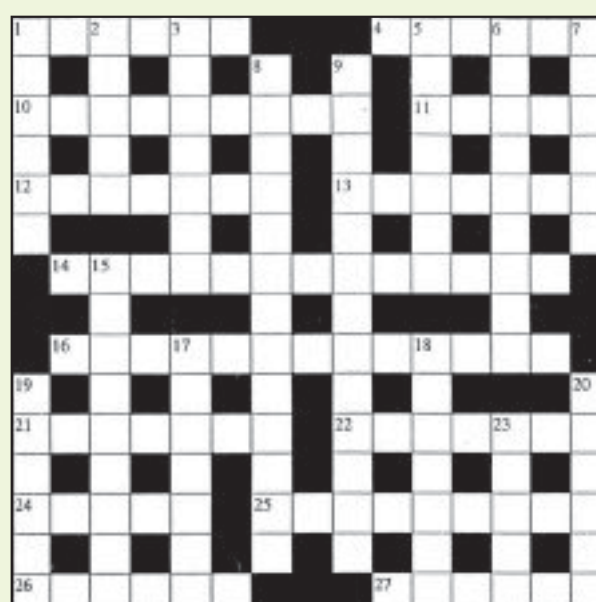
ACROSS

- 1 Digest overdrawn provided within city limits (6)
- 4 Interminable dispute's terribly silly (6)
- 10 Change of policy re change of direction (5-4)
- 11 Hardy's sarcasm! (5)
- 12 Set off in a rage? (7)
- 13 Unfamiliar mathematical quantity (7)
- 14 Taken to get out of another's way (7,6)
- 16 Linesman's justifiable departure from conventional order? (6,7)
- 21 Replace bottle that contains inactive medical substance (7)
- 22 Stout man holds stout perhaps (4-3)
- 24 Mount 100ft? (5)
- 25 I name twelfth man available if required (2,7)
- 26 Daughter never wandered round US city (6)
- 27 Cross part of lengthy bridge (6)

DOWN

- 1 Cowardly, but caught black bird (6)
- 2 Duke sorry coming up for flag (5)
- 3 Foolish one turned out during endless commotion (7)
- 5 Ketch, it bumped into trees (7)
- 6 Of amoebae coming from tropical zoo, not one left (9)
- 7 Way of preserving food that's losing moisture (6)
- 8 Monarch's quainter voice trembled (5,8)
- 9 I cut repayment out for part of vehicle (9,4)
- 15 Olivia not troubled by crime (9)
- 17 Several times find Frenchman in a quiver (7)
- 18 Body of persons sent on undertaking to ambassador's office (7)
- 19 Saw cocaine included had been seasoned (6)
- 20 Reconciled a sin (6)
- 23 Panellist on trial (5)

SCRIBBLE HERE



QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Jerky (6)
- 4 Itself (anag.) (6)
- 10 Being (9)
- 11 Church cellar (5)
- 12 Bring vessel to a standstill (5,2)
- 13 Parasite (7)
- 14 Painful new experience (7,2,4)
- 16 Variegated seabird (9,4)
- 21 Carry out (7)
- 22 Submit (4,3)
- 24 Meadow (5)
- 25 Restaurant (9)
- 26 Explosive case (6)
- 27 Coming (6)

DOWN

- 1 Childcare facility (6)
- 2 ___ board (5)
- 3 Uncomplaining (7)
- 5 Scold (4,3)
- 6 Poisonous toadstool (3,6)
- 7 Restaurant (6)
- 8 Unimportance (13)
- 9 Allowing to retire (10,3)
- 15 Wonder (9)
- 17 Arundel (anag.) (7)
- 18 Dedicated (7)
- 19 Reinforce (colloq.) (4,2)
- 20 Despot (6)
- 23 Sower (anag.) (5)

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SUDOKU SOLUTIONS No114

EASY



MEDIUM



HARD



CRYPTIC SOLUTION No114

ACROSS: 8 Expurgate 9 Azure 10 At one time 11 Kneel 12 Charm offensive 15 Toby 17 Runny 19 Vein 21 Antarctic Ocean 23 Feral 24 Breakneck 26 Robin 27 As a result
DOWN: 1 Exotic 2 Quandary 3 Egg-timer 4 Stum 5 Backing 6 Juvenile 7 Well-being 13 Fungi 14 Stratford 16 Bathrobe 18 Yeomanry 19 Viennese 20 Praline 22 Nicely 25 Rusk

QUICK SOLUTION No115

Beef up 20 Tyrant 23 Worse
15 Amaze 17 Laundry 18 Devoted 19 Eatery 8 Inconsequence 9 Pensioning off
Culley 3 Patient 5 Tick off 6 Fly agaric 7
26 Petard 27 Advent. **DOWN:** 1 Crèche 2 Execute 22 Give way 24 Field 25 Caterer
Baptism of fire 16 Harlequin duck 21
11 Crypt 12 Heave to 13 Sponger 14
ACROSS: 1 Choppy 4 Stifle 10 Existence

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ON GENERAL RELEASE

HARRY BROWN (18)



Sir Michael Caine plays a vigilante pensioner hunting down a gang of council estate thugs who killed his best friend. The 76-year-old is mesmerising as a war veteran with nothing to lose.

THE MEN WHO STARE AT GOATS (15)



George Clooney stars in The Men Who Stare at Goats, a deranged tale of US servicemen who are trained to become Jedi warriors, capable of killing with mind-power alone. Ewen McGregor co-stars.

MICHAEL JACKSON'S THIS IS IT (PG)



Hastily constructed from hundreds of hours of rehearsal footage, Kenny Ortega's documentary is a glowing tribute to the King Of Pop as he prepared for the most spectacular shows of his career.

Damon hoping weighty role will be award-winner

■ BY SHEREEN LOW

THE last time Matt Damon had to change the way he looked for a movie role, he lost 40 pounds in just 100 days and ended up on medication.

This time the Bourne star says gaining 30 pounds to play whistle-blower Mark Whitacre in The Informant! was slightly more enjoyable.

He reveals: "The gaining weight was alarmingly easy – just drinking beer and eating pizza and burgers, all the stuff you would normally tell yourself not to eat."

Yet the Boston native now shows no sign of the extra weight.

"With the lack of exercise, it was probably two months before [the movie that] I started to put it on, and the movie was a couple of months. I think that was enough time for me!"

In The Informant!, Damon moves away from his 'Bourne Identity' and joins the more sedentary figures of American business.

His wife of three years, Luciana, gave the thumbs-up to his new chubbier look.

"There was just more of me to love," he says, laughing. "She was a good sport about it, and I loved parading around with my belly."

Not only did the father-of-three put on weight for the Steven Soderbergh-directed movie, he also donned a dodgy barnet and a moustache.

"The hair was spectacular," he recalls, grinning. "His face is also rounder than mine, so I had little things stuck in my gums to push my cheeks out. And I wore a fake moustache."

"Every day, people would come and watch us shoot, and somebody would say 'Wow, you are so much better-looking in person'. I would wonder if it was the wig, the moustache, the 30 pounds, the fake nose or the wardrobe."



CHUBBY: Matt Damon as whistle-blower Mark Whitacre

The dark comedy, which is based on a true story, is set in Illinois, in the mid-Nineties.

Matt, who won an Academy Award for his joint screenplay of Good Will Hunting with best mate Ben Affleck, jokes that he agreed to play Mark to nab himself further Oscar glory.

"I tallied up all the things that seemed to gain awards and we wrote the movie around that. That's why I did it."

The multi-talented actor, who has branched out into producing, hasn't always been on such a winning streak. When director Steven Soderbergh rang him almost 10 years ago

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about Ocean's Eleven, Damon initially thought he was being offered a writing job.

"I had just done two movies, which really tanked," he says. "I was thinking that I was going to have to go back to writing because nobody had offered me a job in nine months."

"It was in that climate I got a phone call from Steven. He told me 'I want you to star in the movie'. It was the most unlikely phone call I felt I could get."

The Informant! marks Damon's fifth reunion with the renowned director, whom he credits for improving his acting.

"There was one scene with this regressive interior monologue. I thought about how to play that and when I got to the scene, it turned out weird. Steven gave me a little direction, and saved me from myself."

THE INFORMANT! Certificate 15

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PROPERTY NEWS

Agents report 'strong demand for property'

FOR every property on the market there are five potential buyers looking to buy it, new research has discovered.

A study by the National Association of Estate Agents found high-street branches had an average of 287 prospective buyers on their books in October.

The average number of properties available at estate agents was 57.

The high demand has bumped up prices slightly but has not translated into sales.

House prices increased 1.2 per cent in October, but estate agents sold an average 7.7 properties each during the month, down from 8.5 in September.

Gary Smith, NAEA president, said: "There is strong demand for property and more optimism in the housing market than we have seen for months."

"This is good news for the recovery of the market and for the British economy in general."

First-time buyers accounted for 22 per cent of sales in October, down from 26 per cent in September, but more than double the proportion of first-time buyers in October 2008.

Family and boredom cause seven-year itch

PEOPLE who own their homes feel the need to move house every seven years, new research has discovered.

Co-operative Bank found the main reason people move house is to make room for a growing family.

Other popular reasons homeowners stated for moving house included living closer to work and homeowners getting bored of living in their current home.

One in six said the prospect of taking on new DIY projects was what motivated them to move house.

The survey also discovered gender differences, with women more likely to become bored with a property than men.

John Hughes, Co-operative Bank spokesman, said: "The research shows there are a wide range of motivations behind moving house as people take account of changing family and financial situations throughout their lifetimes."

He added that homeowners should carefully plan their move to ensure they could afford a bigger property.

"It's important that people plan ahead, especially with regard to finances, to ensure they make the right choices and alleviate many of the pressures associated with the moving process," he said.



House prices drop in pre-Christmas slump

■ BY NICK AMES

RESIDENTIAL property prices in the UK have fallen for the first time in three months, but there is still confidence in the market, say experts – and a spring surge is also predicted.

The Rightmove monthly index is the first for months to show a decline in property prices.

They are down 1.6 per cent between October and November, with the organisation saying that it believes a dash to sell before Christmas has prompted sellers to reduce prices.

It said the average house price fell from £230,184 in October to £226,440 in November.

But house prices are still 1.6 per cent higher than this time last year and this is the largest increase since a 2.2 per cent rise in May 2008.

Rightmove is predicting further declines in December and January, traditionally the slowest time of the year for the real estate market.

In all but the most buoyant of markets, home-moving comes second to Christmas festivities at this time of year on an annual basis.

"While the market has recovered from some dreadful lows, this month's price fall proves that it doesn't have the strength to buck seasonal trends," said Miles Shipside, commercial director of Rightmove.

"We expect three months of asking-price falls before a tentative recovery in early spring, likely followed by pre-election jitters."

The index also shows that property stocks remained low, with 30 per cent fewer homes coming on to the market this month than at the same point in 2007, and mortgage availability is still hampering a recovery in the market.



SEEDS OF GROWTH: Despite a seasonal drop, experts are already predicting a house-price surge for spring 2010

Many would-be sellers are still unwilling or unable to come to the market and with the number of new-build properties running at half the levels required to satisfy anticipated demand, aspiring home-movers are set for a frustrating time for years to come, it says.

And overall, the picture is promising, with seven out of 10 regions showing prices are actually up on an annual basis.

The South East saw the largest increase in prices, with an average rise of 3.8 per cent

driven by the lowest average stock levels per estate agent. The East Midlands was the worst performer, with prices 1.6 per cent below those of November 2008.

Rightmove has also found that the upcoming end to the stamp-duty holiday is not causing a flood of sellers or buyers to join the market.

Currently, properties between £125,000 and £175,000 are exempt from paying the 1 per cent levy, with the exemption coming to an end on December 31 this year.

Lending future looks bright, say experts

THE Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML) has cut its forecast for the number of repossessions in 2009 to 48,000.

The estimate is substantially down on earlier forecasts of 75,000 in 2008 and 65,000 in June of this year, and the body says the improvement reflects "lender forbearance, Government measures and the beneficial effect of continuing low interest rates".

In further good news, CML figures show that at the end of September, 194,600 home loans – 1.77 per cent of all UK residential mortgages – were in arrears of 2.5 per cent or more of the outstanding balance.

The result compares with 204,200 mortgages in arrears on the same basis at the end of June, or 1.86 per cent of all mortgages.

In the three months to the end of September, 11,700 properties were repossessed by lenders, up slightly from 11,400 in the previous quarter, and showing a rise of 5 per cent on the third quarter of 2008.

Looking ahead, the CML is predicting that the number of housing transactions will reach 810,000 this year and 850,000 in 2010.

The council expects total net lending to be "modestly positive this year at £8 billion, revised from minus £5 billion previously, and

£15 billion next year". But repossessions could rise in 2010 to 53,000 or 0.48 per cent of outstanding mortgages.

Commenting on the latest arrears data and on the new forecasts, CML director general Michael Coogan said: "Borrowers should take heart from the latest findings as they reinforce the fact that lenders really do want to keep people in their homes – and are doing so."

"In terms of new lending next year, we expect a modest increase. But it is difficult to see the case for a dramatic upturn in the absence of significant improvement in the wider economic picture."

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GIVE AND TAKE IN LOVE Loving loyal female, 30, blue eyes, brown hair, seeking LTR with male 30-35, 6ft+, no baggage, in the Maidstone area. Box 448471

HORSES FOR COURSES... Caring, loving, affectionate female, 30, 5'2", blonde, likes walking, horse riding, animals, seeks affectionate male, 30-40, for lasting, loving relationship. Box 384013

READY TO START AGAIN! Nice, fun-loving single mum, 1, 32, 5'7", brown hair, like cinema, walks, WLTW caring male for friendship, maybe leading to LTR. East Sussex. Box 409416

A FAIRYTALE ENDING! Princess Fiona, 34, looking to meet her Shrek. 5'8", short brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, large build, seeks romantic caring guy for friendship, maybe more! Box 877957

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FEAST YOUR EYES ON ME... Hello I'm Andrea, 35, petite 5'13", shoulder length curly hair, I enjoy eating out, cinema and I'm looking for friendship and possible long term relationship. Box 453039

WHAT YOU SEE... Young looking 36 year old, 5'14", brown eyes, slim, one daughter, hard working, very sincere and caring, genuine, GSOH, seeks similar male 33-43. Rochester. Box 460307

STARRY NIGHTS Hello I'm Sarah, single mum from Kent, brown hair enjoy swimming nights in/out looking for a caring man to share the best thing in life. Box 878378

HISTORIC MEETING? Mum of three, 36, long mousey hair, blue eyes, interested in historical places, music, eating out, seeks kind, caring, genuine male 36-49, non-smoker, for LTR. Box 440693

I LIKE DRIVING IN MY CAR Honest, caring woman, 36, 5'15, slim, blue eyes. I'm caring, honest, have four children. I enjoy drives, horse riding. Maidstone. Box 456159

MEND A BROKEN HEART Single mum, 37, fun-loving, been hurt in past, looking for nice, genuine guy for hopeful happiness - no time wasters! Box 908053

SEIZE THE DAY Loving female, 36, 5'14", brown hair, green eyes, likes socialising, staying in, seeks genuine male for friendship and more. Box 428666

LOVE TO LOVE YOU Lovely female, 38, 5'14", medium/large build, blonde hair, blue eyes, own house, loves walking, going out, the usual! Seeking male for long-term/serious relationship. Box 438102

CUTE AS CAN BE Cute single mum of four, 38, Kent-based, into most things, looking for friendship, possibly romance. Box 897983

EASY TO LOVE

Lovely African female, 39, 5'14", likes football, socialising, cinema, and cooking, looking for a loving and caring male for a LTR. Ashford. Box 460968

YOU CAN'T RESIST... Fun loving intelligent lady, 39, blonde, attractive, GSOH, lots of energy, one daughter, now looking for that special man to share life with. Tonbridge. Box 459991

WANNA RIDE WITH YOU Curvaceous lady, 40, 5'18", long curly hair, into motorbikes! Single mum, seeks fun-loving bike fan for rides into the sunset. Eastbourne. Box 458787

YOUNG-AT-HEART Attractive 38yr old female, dark brown hair, blue eyes, curvy physique, likes days out, music, concerts, cinema, walking, cycling, seeks loving, fun male, for friendship/relationship. Box 901893

DOES THIS SOUND LIKE YOU? Single mum, 42, from Ashford, 5'8", dark hair/eyes, likes wine bars, pubs, days out and keeping fit, looking for a caring and fun-loving gent, 5'8"- Box 461129

SHOW ME LOVE Active sporty female, 43, enjoys the usual things in life, looking for someone genuine and honest, initially for friendship but then who knows? Tunbridge Wells. Box 868335

ANOTHER CHAPTER Hard working PA, 43, single mum, grey-green-blue eyes, loves socialising and enjoying life, seeks loyal, honest male to find love with. Sittingbourne. Box 461037

TALL ORDER Curvy lady, 5'9", 43yrs old, blonde hair/green eyes, I live in Deal in Kent, I'm down-to-earth and like being out and about. Box 456020

LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL! Good-looking brunette from Kent, 43, 5'11", likes bowling, eating in/out etc, looking for a good-looking guy, 35-45, with GSOH for friendship/relationship. Box 450348

SWEET AS HONEY Petite, slim, honey-blond lady, 5'4" age 44, enjoys the seaside and horse-racing, looking for a dark-haired, genuine, honest and professional man, 25-50 in Brighton. Box 458465

HOW YOU DOING? Attractive, curvy single mum, 44, kind, genuine, loyal and loving, seeking a man with similar qualities to share my life with. St Leonards-on-Sea. Box 459128

ENJOY LIFE TO THE FULL Young-looking 46yr old female, 5'14", slim, blonde, non-smoker, affectionate, loyal, caring, seeking a male, 40-45, up to 5'11", to share life with. Ashford/Maidstone area please. Box 461938

A REAL DIAMOND African lady, 47, honest, loving and caring, enjoys most things in life, looking for a male, 50+, for a LTR. Canterbury. Box 460999

NO TIES Lonely, bored, professional Tunbridge Wells Asian lady, 40, WLTW slim, solvent, professional white male 40-50 for company, fun, love and laughter. Box 443573

PRETTY IN PINK Feminine lady, 41, no children some pets, like pink, pop music, astrology, dining out, dancing and singing, collectibles, seeking a man with a nice so. Box 460397

BETWEEN US Asian lady, 41, single, no ties, outgoing, fun-loving, professional, looking for white male, genuine, professional and solvent. Box 451900

FOR A RELATIONSHIP? Shy but confident-once-known female, a mum, 40, likes socialising, tennis, walks, swimming; seeks gent with similar interests to find hopeful love with. Box 452106

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FANCY A DRINK? Hi I'm Judith, 40, small, blonde hair, blue eyes, love the sea and watersports, cinema, animals; WLTW fun-loving guy for friendship and to share what happens. Box 448107

LIFE IS GIVING LOVE A GUARANTEE Down-to-earth lady, 42, sincere, honest and reliable, looking for a male for friendship first, going out, enjoying evenings and perhaps something more later on. Box 449712

HELLO EVERYONE! Single dog-owner, 42, fun-loving, kind and loyal, likes meals out, weekends away, country walks, WLTW a non-smoking guy to share it all with. Seaford. Box 454569

HAPPY TIMES ARE HERE TO STAY Single mum, 42, 5'8", likes fun nights out, cinema, meals out, cuddles and kisses, looking for a fun-loving gent to share happy times with. Ashford. Box 458692

HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU Audrey here, I live in Seaford, and WLTW caring man. I'm fun loving, loyal, honest, adventurous, and love animals, cooking, music, film, country-side. Box 872159

WHY KEEP LOOKING? Looking for a bit of fun as well as a relationship? So am I. 5'12", female, 49, looking for a kind and affectionate man. Box 867730

LIKE MINDS Single female, 49, enjoy a varied social life going out, terpin bowling, out for meals, cinema, travelling, looking to meet someone with similar interests. Eastbourne. Box 866286

BE MY FRIEND AND LOVER Bubbly, caring lady, 47, divorced with 2 teenagers, dark hair, medium build, into cooking, driving, love to talk, laugh and have fun, seeking a normal guy. Box 425952

LAUGHTER, THE BEST MEDICINE Help me write my stand-up comedy routine! I'm 49, you'll need to make me laugh out loud and understand observational comedy to make the grade. Box 892640

JUST IMAGINE Petite, brunette, bubbly, friendly, easygoing single mum, 49, enjoys cinema, eating out, socialising, most things, WLTW genuine male, to see where life takes us. Box 893562

CARING & PROFESSIONAL Female 49, 5'14", long hair, slim build, likes eating out, the beach, travel, seeks a friendly chap, 48-55. Hastings. Box 417100

FAMILY LIFE Warm hearted lady, 51, look younger! I'm 5'16, slim build, with blonde hair, divorced (grown up children), WLTW nice man, 40s/50s in the Aylesford area. Box 461834

NOTHING VENTURED... Hi there, I'm a Sussex based, 51yr old woman, I love eating out, historical sites etc, looking for kind gent for friendship, evenings out, maybe more. Box 459181

MAKE A DATE Petite female, 52, blonde, blue eyes, seeks 46-61 year old single male for life. Interests include walking, photography and more. Brighton. Box 866322

HONESTY A MUST Genuine lady, 54, 5'8", slim build, dark hair, I'm a smoker, live in Maidstone, have a GSOH and enjoy walks, gardening, nights in/out etc. Box 461106

HELP ME OPEN UP Easygoing lady, 46, dark brown hair/blue eyes, medium build, likes life, socialising, the seaside, walks, drinks, WLTW male to share a bottle of wine with. Box 444585

ETERNALLY YOURS Easygoing woman, likes most things in life: country walks, films, cinema, cooking. I'm 46, 5'12", medium build, WLTW genuine, happy guy, easygoing and fun. Box 445635

ARE YOU THE ONE FOR ME? Caring, cute female, 46, petite, likes socialising, dancing, travelling, good food, seeking intelligent, loyal man 42-52 for love and TLC. Seaford. Box 444366

MAKE A DATE Friendly female, 48, blonde, blue eyes, medium build, likes most things, seeking a nice, genuine male 48-52. Canterbury. Box 460951

MAKE IT ENJOYABLE Pretty, young-looking, slender woman, 49, dark-haired seeks reliable gentleman, 25-49 for a loving relationship. Rochester. Box 460686

WHY KEEP LOOKING? Looking for a bit of fun as well as a relationship? So am I. 5'12", female, 49, looking for a kind and affectionate man. Box 867730

LIKE MINDS Single female, 49, enjoy a varied social life going out, terpin bowling, out for meals, cinema, travelling, looking to meet someone with similar interests. Eastbourne. Box 866286

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COMPANIONSHIP, LAUGHTER, HOPEFULLY MORE Curvy & cuddly, outgoing, friendly, honest female, 53, 5'17", larger build, fair hair, likes socialising, country walks, theatre, cinema, music, swimming, WLTW similar loving male. Box 443642

DO YOU HAVE THE BRAINS & THE LOOKS? Professional, attractive female, 54, enjoys the countryside, gardening, keeping fit, reading and live music, looking to meet an attractive and intelligent man for a relationship. Box 448863

LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS! Smart petite lady, 56, 5'14", tall, blonde hair, green eyes, likes restaurants, theatre, cinema, travel abroad; seeking happy guy with similar interests. Box 448795

MAKE A NEW FRIEND Fun-loving lady, 58, 5'14", dark hair, single mum! Likes countryside walks, reading, cooking and cosy nights in, seeks similar male. Folkestone. Box 460420

WALKS ALONG THE COAST Honest & sincere female, 58, tall, GSOH, loves country pubs, coasts, cinema, seeking a man who's a match for me with GSOH for relationship. Box 441622

DIVORCED Loving, kind, honest female, 58, 5'16", interests include the countryside, old pubs, music, reading and baking, looking for that special someone to enjoy life with. Box 478455

ORDINARY ME Gillingham based lady, 60, looking for a male friend and companion. I'm friendly, blonde, 5'14", slim build. Box 462244

MUSIC TO MY EARS Hi my name's Christine, 59, 5'9", slim build, wear glasses, likes live music, theatre, playing darts, looking for a single male, for friendship, possible more. Box 419914

BRIGHTENING UP Cuddly lady, 61, 5'15", blonde, likes swimming, country pubs, cinema and much more, WLTW tallish single man to hopefully brighten each others lives. Box 870214

SIMPLE PLEASURES Hi there, I'm a 61yr old lady, blonde hair/green eyes, medium build, I love dancing, walking by the sea and WLTW like minded gent. Box 459467

AYLESFORD ROMANCE Hi my name's Mary, 62, looking for friendship with a kind, honest man. I like walking, meals out and holidays...how about we have a coffee? Box 866080

LOVE ME, LOVE MY DOG Useful, intelligent, caring female, 62, young looking/aging, like walks, music, cooking, seeking sensitive, caring, uncomplicated male, N/S, perhaps a dog owner, for friendship first. Box 434345

LOVE ME DO Loving and caring lady, 63, 5'13", brown hair/eyes, likes most things in life, looking for a caring and considerate male for friendship, hopefully a LTR. Margate. Box 460929

QUALITY TIME Widow, early 60's, likes dancing, drinks, gardening, socialising, and walks works, seeking a good gent. Ramsgate. Box 460872

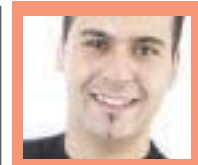
TABLE FOR TWO Honest sincere female, 64, attractive, likes animals, walks, socialising, very GSOH, seeks tall male for friendship, a meal, and maybe more? Hastings. Box 461540

Women seeking women
HOPE YOU'RE OUT THERE? Sincere female, 49, likes football, animals, country pursuits, seeks feminine woman for friendship, maybe more. Gillingham. Box 458805

ATTRACTIVE, BUBBLY LADY 52yrs, 5'16", blonde, size 12 enjoys good food/wine, theatre, countryside, holidays; seeking a sincere, genuine female, for friendship first, possibly relationship. Box 414143

VOLUPTUOUS LADY Curvy lady, 57, very loving and graceful, enjoy the beach, music, walking, theatre, and reading, looking for a lady 50-70. Box 458935

HOMELY SORT Hello there, I'm looking for a kind, gentle partner, a homey woman, with GSOH. I'm female, 56, and enjoy cinema, reading, antiques, gardening, music. Eastbourne. Box 451409



MEN seeking women

SOCIAL AND CARING Hi there, I'm a 23yr old guy, live in Dover, I'm 6ft tall and enjoy walking, seeing friends, pubs, music, films, comedy. WLTW a girl, 18-27. Box 460182

MAKE A DATE Romantic and fun male, 33, 5'8" big brown eyes, seeking a special lady 20-30 to get to know and take you out. Kent. Box 462065

MAKE A DATE Single guy new to the area, 35, 5'8", dark blonde hair, seeks lady to enjoy a film and drink, hopefully leading to LTR. Maidstone. Box 461001

LOVE ME TENDER Fun-loving honest guy, 34, 5'11", brown hair, seeking honest, caring female for friendship, maybe leading to honest, tender relationship. Eastbourne. Box 462200

BOTTLE OF WINE Hi there, I'm an easygoing male, 35, 5'8", medium build, brown hair, I'm based in Brighton and enjoy seeing friends, drinks, cinema, walks. Box 450165

OUTDOOR TYPE Adventurous, very outgoing, romantic male, 35, blonde hair, blue eyes, 5'7", looking for a feminine lady for fun times, friendship, maybe LTR. Box 430523

AN ATTRACTIVE OFFER Handsome, tall male, 38, 6'4", looking for a young lady to slowly re-discover the fun of life. Box 454805

CHEER ME UP 39yr old male, GSOH, like the normal things in life, WLTW a female for fun and possible relationship. Box 454878

NEW IN TOWN Good-looking male, 39, fair hair, blue eyes, nice build and height, social, likes holidays, dining out, fit, seeking a woman to go out with. Rochester. Box 460825

LIFE IS FOR LIVING Divorced male, 40, 5'10", brown hair, blue eyes, likes live music, looking for a fun woman to enjoy life with, to go out for fun. Eastbourne. Box 462094

HAPPY GO LUCKY Stocky, 5'17, 39, male, green-blue eyes, short hair, Virgo, GSOH, love swimming, walks on beaches, days out, seeking similar female, for loving times. Box 455764

LOVE MED DO Brown-eyed man, 40, likes playing darts, WLTW bubbly, fun to be with lady to go on dates with and get to know better. Dover. Box 456129

IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS Loving and caring male, 40, 5'8", medium build, average looks, seeks outgoing, loving, caring person to find love with. Canterbury. Box 458290

A MAN OF FEW WORDS, BUT MUCH LOVE Hi, 40yr old fun-loving male, looking to meet slim fun-loving female, looks unimportant, for hopeful LTR. Many hobbies and interests! Box 456119

MAKE YOUR MARK Hi I'm Mark, 40, 5'8", brown hair and eyes, fit, not ugly, mature, honest, WLTW someone trustworthy and caring. Box 448372

HIYA I'm a cute and laid-back guy, 41, 5'8", short hair, athletic, very tactile, loving and spontaneous, likes shopping, travelling, eating in/out, hate football! Brighton. Box 450614

THE REAL THING Happy-go-go, fun-loving male, 42, 5'8", brown eyes, medium build, likes nights out/in with a can of coke, seeking similar female for companionship. Box 441762

IN LOVE 50s male looking for lady for loving friendship. I'm honest, sincere, genuine and love a laugh, hoping for lasting romance. Box 451188

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COME AND GET ME! Ashford male, 44, dark hair and blue eyes, 5'16", slim, loving, easygoing, loves holidays, theatre, beach walks, WLTW loving genuine lady for potential LTR. Box 460807

BE MINE Slim male, 44, 5'11", dark hair and eyes, likes going out, walks, looking for a single, honest and loving lady, 25-50, who is exotic. Maidstone. Box 460591

GET IN TOUCH Outgoing guy, 45, 6'11", medium build, likes going to the pubs, cinema and walks, looking for a long term relationship with a genuine woman. Medway. Box 460902

GOOD COOK Single dad, confident, nice smile, 42, 5'10", nice build, single dad, own home, loves cooking, going out, sports, WLTW someone similar to me. Maidstone. Box 462077

ROMANTIC TYPE Loyal gent, 45, I'm caring, romantic with a GSOH, looking for similar female, 30-40, slim/medium build, brown hair/blue eyes. Single mums welcome. Hastings. Box 451334

WITTY Active, adventurous, articulate male, 43, own home/car, enjoys shopping, good food, country walks, music, most things, seeks homey, warm, trusting female. Box 408508

ROMANCE IS ALIVE Easygoing 46yr old good looking male, GSOH, looking for a bubbly female, 45-45, for romance and share the good things in life. Box 454688

HURT IN THE PAST Seaford based guy, 47, single, no ties, green eyes, attractive. What you see is what you get. I'm loyal, considerate and hard working. Box 457240

TAKE MY HAND Genuine, honest man, 47, likes dining out, walking, looking to share the good life with a woman, 35-50. Deal. Kent. Box 460441

BE WITH ME Fun genuine man, 48, GSOH, medium build, green-blue eyes, 5'18", nice to be with, looking for a lady between 45-52 with a GSOH. Gillingham. Box 870256

ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR! Youthful dad, 45, 5'10", brown hair, med build, divorcee, likes pubs, cinema, restaurants, theme parks, WLTW female, 36-45, slim, for possible LTR. Cranbrook. Box 737529

GOING SWIMMING! Sincere, down-to-earth male, 47, 6'11", good-looking, athletic, own business, likes swimming, cinema, music, gigs, walking, seeking slim, laid-back lady 28-45, for potential LTR. Box 440847

READ THIS 50yr old man, looking for black lady, 30-60, I like eating in and out, walks, music, cinema, having a laugh. Like what you read? Box 439057

FANCY A DRINK? I love the beach, drinks out, winning/dining. I'm an easygoing gent, 51, slim/medium build, brown hair/eyes. Kent area. Box 461828

WALK THIS WAY Blond male, 53, blue eyes, gosh, likes walking along the coast line, swimming, badminton, WLTW a caring lady for a lasting relationship. Gillingham. Box 456734

MAKE A DATE Sincere male, 54, self-employed, 5'4", likes walks, drinks, dining out, cinema, all the usual things, seeking female companionship and more. St. Leonards. Box 461908

MOTORS NEWS



Late Lotus proves to be definitely worth wait

IT took longer than expected for the stunning Lotus Evora to arrive, but it was worth it.

The Evora (from £47,500) is the junior supercar the legendary sports car maker needed to complement its 'stripped out' Elise/Exige series and evoke memories of the 1970s/80s 'big Lotus' series: the Elite (MkII), Eclat and Esprit – the last being a genuine supercar.

Kent Lotus dealer Lipscomb expects to sell 40 Evoras a year, without cannibalising 60 Elise/Exige orders annually.



Citroën juggles more power with emissions

CITROËN has maintained an increasingly familiar motor industry theme by swapping engines in its C5 family car line-up for greener yet more powerful units.

The apparently contradictory move brings a new 155bhp 1.6-litre petrol unit to replace the 143bhp 2.0 unit, and a single new 160bhp 2.0-litre diesel replaces one of 140bhp and a 173bhp 2.2 unit.

The new petrol engine gets eight per cent more power than before, but averages around 18 per cent better fuel consumption and 16 per cent lower CO2 emissions.



Matiz demise sparks a stylish replacement

IT'S still cheap to buy, but the Chevrolet Matiz city car is close to its sell-by date.

Chevy has a stunning successor waiting in the wings though; the aptly named Spark (pictured) has the cutting-edge style for a sector where 'small and chic' is increasingly important to marketing.

The Spark should arrive in early 2010, and will then soon be joined by the Orlando replacement for the Tacuma MPV and an all-new replacement for the Aveo supermini late next year/early 2011.



SMALL WONDER: The current Swift highlights a change of thinking by manufacturer's Suzuki, with a distinctive shape and a hike in quality plus better handling than its predecessor

Latest Swift shows new high-flying Suzuki style

ROAD TEST SUZUKI SWIFT

BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

1.5GLX five-door, which brings air con and alloys and some other generous goodies, but it still represents excellent value. The Swift interior has smart alloy-effect trimming and sensible storage, decent room for four passengers and the two-level boot with removable false floor is large and flexible for this class.

A logical, smart and gimmick-free dashboard also impresses and best of all, the Swift is closer to its airborne namesake this time; it's a sweet handling, versatile and thoroughly satisfying drive – a cut-price Mini if you like – and there's a 'hot' 1.6-litre Sport model too (0-62mph in 8.9 seconds).

Not that this overshadows the 1.5-litre much (0-62mph in 10 seconds) as it has all the latest Swift hallmarks: tight steering, flat cornering and slick gearbox, while ride quality and motorway refinement is not sacrificed totally to driver appeal, though this 1.5 engine can sound buzzy at times. Unlike past Swifts a diesel is also offered (£11,250), courtesy of Fiat, which can average 60mpg.

Some things remain unchanged though; this much improved Swift range retains the brand's traditional reliability, while flying higher and faster than any predecessor.



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CORSA SXi 3-dr 1.2i 16v

60 Monthly Payments	£163.45
Customer deposit	£999.00
Total deposit (incl. £1000 Vauxhall contribution)	£1999.00
Cash Price On-the-road (incl. £2000 Government Scrappage Allowance)	£10,175.00
Amount financed	£8176.00
Initial credit arrangement fee* (incl. £10 option to purchase fee)	£149.00
Final credit arrangement fee**	£150.00
Total amount payable	£12,105.11
Total amount payable by customer	£11,105.11

9.0% APR

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Official Government Test Environmental Data – Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): Corsa SXi 1.2i 16v: urban 35.3 (8.0), extra-urban 56.5 (5.0) combined 46.3 (6.1), CO₂ Emissions 146g/km.

Model shown has optional VXR Styling Pack One (£800 incl. fitting and VAT) and optional 17-inch twin spoke alloy wheels (£310 incl. fitting and VAT). Finance by GMAC UK plc, PO Box 6666, Cardiff CF15 7YT, applicants must be aged 18 or over. UK supplied vehicles only. *Payable with the first Monthly Payment. **Payable with the final Monthly Payment. Fully Comprehensive Insurance subject to eligibility, status, terms and conditions at participating retailers only. Offer only applies to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and Pack Sales. All other sales categories are excluded. Corsa SXi drivers must be aged between 19-80 and will need to have held a full UK/EU driving licence for at least 2 years. A compulsory excess of £250 will apply. Please note that additional excesses do apply in respect of young drivers and modifications. Vauxhall Insurance underwritten by Provident Insurance plc (Free Insurance Offer in Northern Ireland is underwritten by AXA Insurance Limited) authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. The free involuntary redundancy cover is optional and is offered to customers who take out a finance agreement with GMAC from a participating Financial Services Authority authorised retailer. The cover, which is subject to eligibility, is for the first 24 months of the finance agreement (excluding the first 90 days, and is up to a maximum of 12 monthly payments). Terms and conditions apply (see retailer for further details of cover). The insurance is provided by Finance Insurance Company Limited. Other providers of redundancy cover are available, for more information see www.money.made.clear.fsa.gov.uk. £2000 Government Scrappage Allowance is dependent on the vehicle meeting the full Government Scrappage incentive criteria. The Government Scrappage payment applies to cars first registered in the United Kingdom on or before 29.02.00 when traded in against a new car subject to conditions and whilst Government funding applies. All offers excl. Free Insurance (see above) are available to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only). Take delivery before the 31st December to beat the VAT increase. All other sales categories are excluded. Offers may not apply to all Retailer stocks. Offers apply to selected new vehicles ordered or registered between 16.10.09 and 02.12.09, and are subject to status, eligibility, terms and conditions. Offers may not apply to all retailer stocks and are available at participating retailers only. (Vaux82629)

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AGILA										09	09	Insignia Elite CDTi Auto (160)	19D	4	Black sapphire	8,250	22995	09
Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£			09	09	Insignia S Tourer Ex (160)	19D	5	Silver lightening	5,200	17,495	
05	55	Agila Expression	1.0	5	Star silver	24,800	3,995			MERIVA								
08	58	Agila Club A/c	1.2	5	Steel Silver	4,385	7,995			Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£	
08	58	Agila Club A/c CDTi	1.3D	5	Steel silver	6,450	8,695			03	53*	Meriva Enjoy	1.6	5	Star silver	86,875	3,495	
09	09	Agila Design Auto	1.2	5	Sugar white	2,290	9,995			05	05	Meriva Design CDTi	1.7D	5	Spearmint silver	54,350	6,995	
09	09	Agila Design	1.2	5	Lemon grass	4,150	8,995			08	58	Meriva CDTi Breeze Plus	1.3	5	Black sapphire	10,930	9,995	
09	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Atlanta blue	6,230	9,995			09	09	Meriva Active CDTi	1.3D	5	Ultra blue	8,750	10,695	
09	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Star silver	5,210	9,995			TIGRA								
ASTRA										Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£	
Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£			06	06	Tigra Exclusiv	1.4	2	Air blue	30,500	8,995	
05	55	Agila Expression	1.0	5	Star silver	24,800	3,995			VECTRA								
08	58	Agila Club A/c	1.2	5	Steel Silver	4,385	7,995			Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£	
08	58	Agila Club A/c CDTi	1.3D	5	Steel silver	6,450	8,695			06	06	Vectra elite CDTi (150)	1.9D	5	Black Sapphire	38,125	8,995	
09	09	Agila Design Auto	1.2	5	Sugar white	2,290	9,995			06	56	Vectra Exclusiv	1.8	5	Star silver	26,250	6,995	
09	09	Agila Design	1.2	5	Lemon grass	4,150	8,995			08	58	Vectra Exclusive CDTi	1.9D	5	Black sapphire	12,700	10,995	
09	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Atlanta blue	6,230	9,995			ZAFIRA								
09	09	Agila Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Star silver	5,210	9,995			Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£	
CORSA										04	54*	Zafira Design DTi	2.0D	5	Colour	67,850	5,495	
Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£			05	05*	Zafira Design CDTi	1.9D	5	Star silver	66,000	7,995	
06	56	Corsa Design	1.4	5	Silver lightening	39,050	6,195			06	56	Zafira Club	1.6	5	Metro blue	40,250	7,995	
07	57	Corsa Design	1.2	3	Air blue	21,575	7,495			06	56	Zafira Club Auto	1.8	5	Silver lightening	12,120	8,995	
07	57	Corsa Design CDTi	1.3D	5	Air blue	25,800	8,495			09	09	Zafira Sri XP CDTi	1.9D	5	Star silver	3,780	17,995	
08	08	Corsa Breeze	1.2	3	Star silver	12,220	8,250			OTHER MAKES								
08	58	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	1.3	5	Silver lightening	12,775	9,495			Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£	
08	58	Corsa Design CDTi	1.3	3	Metro blue	6,425	9,795			05	55*	Ford Focus Zetec	1.6	5	Colour	53,050	6,795	
09	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	5	Metro blue	11,390	8,995			05	55	Citroen C2 design	1.1	3	Blue	30,450	4,495	
08	58	New Corsa Sxi CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	4,200	8,995			DUE SOON								
08	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	5	Black sapphire	7,070	9,295			Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£	
09	09	Corsa Sxi In Touch	1.2	5	Star silver	4,110	9,495			07	57	Vectra CDTi Elite (150ps)	1.9D	5	Black sapphire	41,000	9,995	
09	09	Corsa Sxi In Touch	1.2	5	Star silver	2,940	9,495			08	58	Vectra Exclusive	1.8	5	Black sapphire	12,000	9,995	
09	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	1.3	3	Black sapphire	9,670	10,495			06	56	Signum Elite Auto CDTi	1.9D	5	Misty grey	48,000	8,995	
09	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	1.3	3	Flame red	9,270	9,995			08	57	Corsa VXR	1.6	3	Arden blue	15,000	12,995	
09	09	Corsa Active	1.2	5	Silver lightening	6,520	9,995			08	58	Astra Sri S hatch CDTi 150ps	1.9D	3	Power red	16,000	13,495	
09	09	Corsa Design In Touch	1.2	3	Black sapphire	3,380	9,495			08	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Flame red	12,000	10,495	
INSIGNIA										07	57	Meriva Design CDTi	1.7D	5	Star silver	34,900	8,995	
Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£											
09	58	Insignia Elite Auto Nav	2.0	5	Star silver	4,060	19,995											
09	09	Insignia S Tourer Ex (160)	1.9D	5	Panacotta	12,000	16,995											

All mileages are approximate, as vehicles are still in use at the present time

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A4, S4 Quattro, rv04uhh, immobiliser, remote central locking, full leather, electric seats, head restraints, heated seats, rear headrests, front fog lamps, abs, twin air bags, power hood, 18" alloys, 4x4, red, 53000 miles, £13999, Maidstone, 01622 200 100 (TRADE)

A4, Fsi Sport, re54hlf, immobiliser, remote central locking, cloth upholstery, power steering, stability control, abs, multiple airbags cd player, radio, alloy wheels, visit our website for details of 50 simiAR Cars. silver, 49000 miles, £7990, Kent, 01342 851122 (TRADE)

BMW

1 Series, 116i 16 Sport 5dr with full leather, lt55vmd, remote alarm, remote central locking, full leather, rear headrests, power steering, traction control, abs, multiple airbags, colour coded body, japan red, 48000 miles, £9995, Welling, 0208 8548037 (TRADE)

1 Series, 118d M SPORT, sy06awx, only 43005 miles, manufacturers service history, upgraded alloys, cd player, aerosport spoilers, air conditioning, alarm, anti dazzle rear screen, anti skid control + traction, bmw business stereo, clear lenses, le mans blue, £13990, Wrotham Heath, 01732 220555 (TRADE)

CITROEN

BERLINGO, Multispace, s923 ecd, power steering, air bag, remote central locking, remote alarm, electric front windows, rear wash/wipe, rear headrests, adjustable steering column, cd player, radio, cloth upholstery, red, 85100 miles, £1995, Plumstead, 020 8855 4000 (TRADE)

BERLINGO, 1.6HDI Refrigerated Chiller / Freezer, aaaaaa, cd player, power steering, electric windows, electric mirrors, remote central locking, brand new, delivery mileage, grp lined, hubbard fridge standby available if required (optional extra), over 50 fridge vans in stock. BHRV.co.uk, white, 15 miles, £5955, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

BERLINGO, Jifty Hot & Cold Catering Truck, fn04zv, remote central locking, cloth upholstery, power steering, air bag, electric windows, electric mirrors, refrigerated display, heated display, hand wash facilities, white, 0 miles, £8995, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

BERLINGO, Jifty Hot & Cold Catering Truck, w173knu, large fridge, large oven, hot & cold water, ambient section, white, 77000 miles, £8995, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

C2, 1.4i VTR 3dr Hatch, gi59eke, pas, abs, air conditioning, remote central locking, front electric windows, radio/cd, trip computer, passenger airbag, side airbags, electricdoor mirrors, steering wheel reach adjustment, drivers airbag, front head restraints, full size spare wheel, service indicator, steel wheels, immobiliser, rear headrests, isofix child seat anchor points, folding rear seats, body coloured bumpers, cloth seat trim, height adjustable drivers seat, rear wiper, sports seats, audio remote control, black, 15 miles, £9995, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

C2, Design 1124cc 3 door, 2005, cd player central locking driver's airbag power steering history check electric windows, blue, 30450 miles, £4495, Sittingbourne, 01795 476222 (TRADE)

C3, Desire 5dr, en07nws, cloth upholstery, power steering, immobiliser, remote central locking, head restraints, folding rear seats, rear headrests, metallic paintwork, rear wash/wipe, colour coded body, twin air bags, isofix, abs, electric mirrors, electric front windows, air conditioning, cd player, black, 24000 miles, £5999, Maidstone, 01622 200 100 (TRADE)

C3, Exclusive, gu08kbn, abs, air bag, immobiliser, central locking, remote central locking, air conditioning, stereo, electric front windows, trip computer, front fog lamps, automatic electric windows, radio, mp3 player, child locks, head restraints, isofix, 16" alloys, height adjustable front seatbelts, digital clock, oil temperature gauge, height adjustable front headrests, centre console with cupholders, aluminium gear knob, driver/passenger armrests, pollen filter, rear parcel shelf, front seatback pockets, audible speed warning programmable, black panel night illumination, drawer under drivers seat, oil level indicator, 5 three point inertia reel seatbelts, coolant level warning indicator, split folding rear seat, aluminium effect interior door handles, energy absorbing side impact protection, door pockets on all four doors, aluminium effect front vents, heated rear window with intermittent wash/wipe, automatic, 16" cheetah alloy wheels, grey, 2000 miles, £9995, Welling, 0208 303 4030 (TRADE)

FIAT

500, 1.4 Sport 3dr Hatch, wn58wcy, pas, abs, remote central locking, front electric windows, front fog lights, radio/cd, side airbags, electricdoor mirrors, drivers airbag, space saver spare wheel, isofix child seat anchor points, body coloured bumpers, height adjustable drivers seat, sports seats, traction control, tropicalia yellow, 15 miles, £10995, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

BRAVO, 1.4 Active Sport 5dr Hatch, rk59pgy, pas, abs, remote central locking, front electric windows, front fog lights, alloy wheels, trip computer, cruise control, side airbags, electricdoor mirrors, steering wheel reach adjustment, drivers airbag, rear headrests silver metallic, 100 miles, £10995, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

BRAVO, 1.9 Multijet 150 Dynamic 5dr Diesel Hatch, rk59pnf, pas, abs, remote central locking, front electric windows, rear electric windows, front fog lights, trip computer, cruise control, side airbags, electricdoor mirrors, steering wheel reach adjustment, drivers airbag, climate control, 100 miles, £13995, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

BRAVO, 1.6 Multijet Dynamic Eco 5dr Diesel Hatch, av58tff, pas, abs, remote central locking, front electric windows, rear electric windows, front fog lights, alloy wheels, trip computer, cruise control, side airbags, electricdoor mirrors, steering wheel reach adjustment, drivers airbag, climate control, folding rear seats, isofix child seat anchor points, body coloured bumpers, space saver spare wheel, 3x3 point rear seat belts, rear headrests, cool jazz blue metallic, 12000 miles, £10995, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

DOBLO, 1.9 Multijet Dynamic 5dr [120] Diesel Estate, rv58jvf, pas, abs, air conditioning, remote central locking, front electric windows, front fog lights, immobiliser, front armrest, front head restraints, 3x3 point rear seat belts, rear wiper, cloth seat trim, height adjustable drivers seat, beige metallic, 17250 miles, £8995, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

DOBLO, Bonhoffa Hot & Cold Catering Vending Truck, av05nwl, bonhoffa conversion, hot cabinet, cold cabinet, 3x access hatches, hand wash, led internal lighting, white, 29000 miles, £11995, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

DOBLO, Jtd Dynamic Diesel, gk06wmg, metallic paintwork, electric mirrors, electric windows, air conditioning, cd player, radio, rear wash/wipe, power steering, abs, twin air bags, front fog lamps, cambelt changed, central locking, remote central locking, cloth upholstery, retractable headrests, height adjustable, 76000 miles, £4999, Maidstone, 01622 200 100 (TRADE)

DOBLO Cargo, mf56uxz, cloth upholstery, twin sliding doors, ply-lined, bulkhead, barn doors, adjustable steering column, power steering, abs, air bag, white, 29000 miles, £4745, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)

DUCATO, 35 Lwb 120 Multijet Refrigerated Chiller, wp56ofg, side load door, dual passenger seat, cd player, air bag, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, remote central locking, grp lined, hubbard fridge, electric standby available if required, over fifty fridge vans in stock. www.BHRV.co.uk, white, 20000 miles, £11995, Sevenoaks, 01474 853034 (TRADE)


GRANDE Punto, bg56ypk, pas, abs, remote central locking, front electric windows, radio/cd, trip computer, electricdoor mirrors, steering wheel reach adjustment, drivers airbag, cloth seat trim, isofix child seat anchor points, front head restraints, service indicator, height adjustable drivers seat, full size spare wheel, steel wheels, rear armrest, 3x3 point rear seat belts, rear wiper, body coloured bumpers, immobiliser, new orleans blue metallic, 26880 miles, £6285, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

GRANDE Punto, lm08vue, pas, abs, remote central locking, front electric windows, alloy wheels, radio/cd, trip computer, side airbags, steering wheel reach adjustment, drivers airbag, isofix child seat anchor points, rear armrest, 3x3 point rear seat belts, height adjustable drivers seat, rear wiper, full size spare wheel, jungle grey metallic, 3074 miles, £7987, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

GRANDE Punto, gf56eka, pas, abs, remote central locking, front electric windows, radio/cd, trip computer, electricdoor mirrors, steering wheel reach adjustment, drivers airbag, cloth seat trim, isofix child seat anchor points, front head restraints, service indicator, coloured bumpers, immobiliser, rock'n'roll blue, 20000 miles, £5995, Tunbridge Wells, 01892 549766 (TRADE)

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04 04 IVECO CARGO 75E17 TIPPER 14ft day cab, dual pass seat, EW, 77,600km

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06 56 Iveco Stralis AT190S27P

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04 04 Iveco Cargo 180E24

26ft platform day cab, 133,600km

04 04 Iveco Cargo 75E17

14ft tipper day cab, 77,600 km

05 05 Iveco Cargo 75E17

20ft platform day cab, 149,000km

06 06 Iveco Cargo 75E17

20ft sleeper box,

rear roller shutter, 194,080km

08 58 Iveco Cargo 75E16

20ft box tuckaway t/lift, 12,968km

07 07 Iveco Cargo 75E17

20ft box column t/lift, 70,000km

06 56 Iveco Cargo 75E17

20ft box tuckaway t/lift, 70,893km

VANS

06 56 Iveco Daily 35S12 Van XLWB

3950 w/base, 35,669 miles

07 07 Iveco Daily 35S12 Van LWB

3300 w/base, 35,662 miles

05 05 Iveco Daily 35S12 Van LWB

3300 w/base, 59,000 miles

07 07 Iveco Daily 35S12 Van LWB

3300 w/base, 50,661 miles

04 54 Iveco Daily 35S12 Van XLWB

3950 w/base, 37,500 miles

08 08 Fiat Ducato 30 Van SWB

100MJT 2.2lt, 24,037 miles

07 07 Fiat Ducato 30 Van SWB

100MJT 2.2lt, 19,418 miles

09 58 Fiat Ducato 35 Van LWB

120MJT H/R, 400 miles

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07 56 Fiat Scudo 1.9D Van LWB

twin side load doors,

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06 06 Fiat Doblo SX Van 1.9MJT

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OTHER MAKES

06 56 Nissan Cabstar 34.10

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08 08 FIAT DUCATO 30 SWB 100MJT 2.2lt, dual pass seat, EW, b /head, remote lock, plyline, 24,035 miles



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You will join the school at an exciting time, and will have a major contribution to the design of the new school. As part of the school's vision for continual improvement, you will develop programmes, procedures and policies to support students' needs, promote inclusion and advance the attendance and achievement of all students.

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Grade: C2 - Salary: £19,621 - £26,276

Hours: 37 hours per week - 52 weeks a year
(variable in accordance with the needs of the Children's Centre)

Location: Miers Court Primary School

Silverspot Close Rainham Gillingham Kent ME8 8JR

Tel: 01634 388943 or e-mail:

office@mierscourt.medway.sch.uk



Would you like to be part of the exciting new Children's Centre at Miers Court Primary School?

We are seeking to recruit a Community Liaison Officer to join our enthusiastic team as we prepare to open our brand new children's centre. Someone who welcomes new challenges, has an excellent sense of humour and is willing to lead a team offering new projects for local families with young children and working in partnership with a range of local agencies.

Applicants should have:

- education to degree level or relevant experience
- the skills to involve families with young children within a diverse community and become active in the community.
- a good knowledge of the local community.
- excellent communication and leadership skills.
- the ability to maintain systems and a wide range of records and written reports.
- the aspiration for excellence in services for children and families
- a commitment to equal opportunities in service delivery and employment.
- an enthusiasm to develop good working relationships with a wide range of partners, agencies and individuals.
- a desire to keep abreast of current developments, research and best practice, and to review, evaluate and implement change accordingly.

Informal visits to the school are most welcome.

Offer of appointment is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure.

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Or call 01304 843011 for an Application Form.

Closing date: Friday 4th December 2009

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To apply for this position, please send your CV to

Sharon Mallin, Porsche Centre Tonbridge,
Brook farm, Five Oak green Road, Tonbridge,
Kent TN11 0QN or email
sharon.mallin@porschetonbridge.co.uk



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Child and Family Liaison Officer
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Picture: IGOR KUPCO



BRACE: Greg Phelps scored both of Sittingbourne's tries

Bourne battle their way to vase quarter-finals

Sittingbourne 15 Old Freeman's 10

SITTINGBOURNE reached the regional quarter-finals of the Junior Vase with a hard-earned win against Surrey side Old Freeman's on Saturday.

The home side's pack was their most dangerous weapon in the opening exchanges and it provided Sittingbourne with the opening score. Greg Phelps picked up from the base of a scrum and barged his way through a gap before offloading to centre Sam Catlin, who finished off the move.

Bourne continued to dominate but

RUGBY

struggled to put points on the board. The pressure finally paid off just before half-time when Mark Penney kicked a penalty to make it 8-0.

Old Freeman's seized the initiative early in the second-half and reduced the arrears to one point with a converted try.

The setback sparked Bourne back into life and they began to regain control, both in terms of possession and territory. Midway through the half Phelps pounced on a loose

ball and sprinted clear to the line. Penney's conversion put them 15-7 ahead.

A long-distance penalty brought the visitors to within one score of victory, but Sittingbourne ran the clock down well.

Sheppey are also in the hat for the fourth round after receiving a bye. They were scheduled to play Old Grammarians, who were unable to field a front row due to injuries and had to concede.

The Islanders return to Kent 1 action this weekend with a trip to Beccehamian, while Bourne visit fellow top four side Gillingham Anchors.

Picture: IGOR KUPCO



OVERDUE WIN: Alison Cox scored four as Gore Court beat Folkestone

Court ladies shine against Folkestone

Gore Court ladies 8

Folkestone ladies 3

GORE Court's ladies claimed only their second league win of the season with a stirring display against Folkestone on Saturday.

Lapses in concentration threatened to undermine the home side as Sarah Goulsdon and Alison Cox's goals were cancelled out. Cox scored twice to make it 4-2 before half-time and Court went on to assert themselves after the break.

A third goal from Folkestone was cancelled out by Susan Cox who rounded off a fine team move with a goal.

Jenny Francis got the sixth with a sweet strike from the top of the D and Alison Cox got her fourth of the afternoon to put the result beyond doubt. Leanne Payne rounded off a superb team performance to make it 8-3.

The victory lifted Court off the bottom of the East Women's League Division One South ahead of Saturday's trip to Henley.

Aaron Glass continued his superb goalscoring form as the men's 1st XI drew 5-5 at London Wayfarers. Glass notched four to take his tally to 22 from just eight games, with Paul Surridge scoring the visitors' other goal.

Despite the draw Court's lead at the top of the South League Premier Division Two was extended to two points. Henley visit this Saturday.



SLIPPING: Gary Abbott will be looking to halt Sittingbourne's recent slump with victory over Eastbourne Town on Saturday

Picture: IGOR KUPCO



NEW DEAL: Brickies captain Joe Dowley with Nigel Hidson, representing Sittingbourne's new sponsor, Hidson's of Rainham

Abbott's frustration as Brickies spurn chances

FOOTBALL

■ BY STEVE TERTVET

Sittingbourne 0

Leatherhead 3

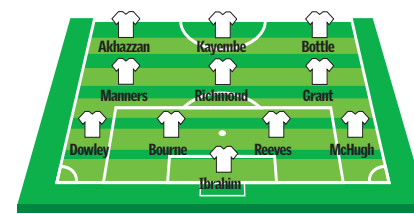
O'Shea 42, 45, Terry 50

before Leatherhead stole ahead against the run of play.

Dominic O'Shea's curling shot caught Deren Ibrahim cold to give the visitors the lead and O'Shea repeated the trick on the stroke of half-time when he turned sharply and fired in a second to stun Sittingbourne.

Five minutes into the second-half, the result was put beyond doubt when Joe Dowley's horribly short back-pass was intercepted by Kev Terry who had no difficulty in beating Ibrahim to make it 3-0.

Abbott, who will hand starts to Joe Horlock and Tom Bradbrook against Eastbourne, will be without defender Femi Omogbehin, who quit the club following an exchange with the manager after the Dulwich defeat.



Subs used: Bradbrook (Grant 49), Horlock (Manners 60), B Abbott (McHugh 87)

Omogbehin had been training and playing matches with League Two side Dagenham & Redbridge, and when Abbott insisted he focus solely on his career at Sittingbourne, the right-back took exception.

Abbott said: "Femi wasn't right before or during the Dulwich game. All this Dagenham stuff had got into his head so I told him he was a Sittingbourne player and stopped him training there."

"He thought I shouldn't have said it in front of the other players, that I'd disrespected him. He called me the next day to say he didn't want to play for me any more."

Off the field, Sittingbourne have announced their new main sponsor – Hidson's of Rainham, Nissan, Kia, SEAT and Citroen dealers.

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Lilywhites brought back to earth by chasing Deres

FOOTBALL

BY STEVE Tervet

Erith & Belvedere 3

Collier 17, Cottrell 45, Cable 75

Faversham Town 1

Skelton 58

THE gap at the top of the Kent League Premier Division is now just seven points after second-placed Erith & Belvedere inflicted Faversham's first league defeat of the season.

Dale Skelton's 58th-minute strike was no more than the Lilywhites' efforts merited, but by that time the Deres had raced into a 2-0 lead with Town failing to take their chances in an entertaining first-half.

The defeat followed Faversham's FA Vase exit at Badshot Lea in midweek, where Richard Sinden's goal was in vain as the Combined Counties outfit ran out 2-1 winners.

Justin Luchford must now turn his attention to Saturday's league game at home to Sporting Bengal United, while the Deres host their second huge game in a week, with third-placed Herne Bay the visitors to Park View Road.

The Lilywhites dominated much of the first-half on Saturday, with Buster Smissen twice denied and Damian Abel and Dane Luchford going close, so it was therefore against the run of play when Erith struck the first blow on 17 minutes.



Picture: ION V GRAY

CONSOLATION: Dale Skelton's second-half strike was not enough to stop Faversham losing at Erith & Belvedere – their second defeat in a week

A fine attacking move, their first of the match, saw Ross Cable receive the ball wide on the right and deliver a pinpoint cross which John-Paul Collier controlled before turning to shoot past Rob French.

While the chances then dried up, Faversham continued to hold their own but were stunned when the home side took a 2-0 lead deep in first-half stoppage-time.

Cable, the former Faversham player, was again the provider as he played Adam Cottrell into space and his shot from the edge of the area proved too good for French.

Faversham continued to press after the break and the Deres goal came under intense pressure until the goal eventually arrived just before the hour.

Luchford's fine wing play saw him get to the byline and square the ball across to Skelton, who finished with aplomb to set the game

Faversham Town starting XI



Subs used: Sinden (Smissen 60), Tanner (Luchford 60)

alive. The visitors thought they had equalised soon after, when Tom Hickman touched home Abel's shot, but the assistant's flag was already raised for off-side.

The missed chances came back to haunt Town with 15 minutes to go, when the officials failed to spot the ball had gone out for a Faversham corner and Erith broke to score a third.

As the Deres broke, French and Ashley Brown got in each other's way and Cable stole in to score the goal his afternoon's work deserved.

LEAGUE TABLES

(Not including midweek games)

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Worthing	17	11	1	5	+13	34
2 Folkestone Invicta	15	10	4	1	+12	34
3 Walton & Hersham	15	9	3	3	+10	30
4 Godalming Town	14	9	2	3	+12	29
5 Fleet Town	15	8	2	5	+10	26
6 Merstham	15	8	2	5	+3	26
7 Croydon Athletic	13	7	4	2	+19	25
8 Chatham Town	17	7	3	7	-3	24
9 Metropolitan Police	17	5	7	5	+7	22
12 Ramsgate	16	6	3	7	0	21
10 Corinthian-Casuals	16	6	1	9	+4	19
11 Whyteleafe	16	6	1	9	+4	19
12 Ramsgate	14	5	4	5	+3	19
13 Sittingbourne	14	5	4	5	0	19
14 Dulwich Hamlet	16	4	7	5	-3	19
15 Leatherhead	13	5	3	5	+4	18
16 Burgess Hill Town	13	5	3	5	0	18
17 Walton Casuals	15	4	4	7	-6	16
18 Eastbourne Town	15	3	5	7	-5	14
19 Horsham YMCA	14	3	4	7	-15	13
20 Ashford Town	15	2	5	8	-24	11
21 Chipstead	14	2	4	8	-14	10
22 Whitstable Town	15	2	1	12	-27	7

KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

1 Faversham Town	12	10	1	1	+22	31
2 Erith & Belvedere	11	8	0	3	+7	24
3 Herne Bay	11	7	1	3	+6	22
4 Sevenoaks Town	12	6	3	3	+8	21
5 Beckenham Town	11	6	1	4	+10	19
6 Tunbridge Wells	11	3	6	2	+4	15
7 Erith Town	10	4	3	3	+2	15
8 Greenwich Borough	11	4	3	4	+1	15
9 Hythe Town	8	4	2	2	+12	14
10 Norton Sports	11	4	1	6	-2	13
11 Sporting Bengal Utd	10	4	1	5	-10	13
12 Deal Town	10	3	3	4	-7	12
13 Fisher	14	3	2	9	-14	11
14 Holmesdale	12	3	1	8	-8	10
15 Corinthian	8	0	3	5	-13	3
16 Lordswood	10	0	3	7	-16	3

FIXTURES (Saturday): Ryman Division One South: Sittingbourne v Faversham Town. Kent League Premier Division: Faversham Town v Sporting Bengal United; Norton Sports v Sevenoaks Town

Norton cast Fisher aside with fine all-round display

FOOTBALL

Fisher 0 Norton Sports 3

NORTON Sports enjoyed their biggest win of the season on Saturday as they brushed Fisher aside with a fine all-round performance.

Goals from Lee Taylor, Ryan Rook and Ashley Baverstock gave the visitors maximum points and lifted them to tenth in the Kent League Premier Division table.

With the previous week's game at Deal called off, it was Norton's first game in a fortnight and their first league outing since winning at Hythe last month.

Fisher went into the game on a run of three successive league defeats but fought hard in a competitive opening half hour.

Norton, never a side to back away from a physical battle, matched their hosts and took the lead on 31 minutes. An excellent team move laid the foundations for man of the match Michael Green to lay the ball off to Taylor, who fired home right-footed from close range.

Just before the break Fisher were hit by a second goal when Norton were awarded a penalty at a corner. Rook stepped up and blasted home his third goal of the season to put the visitors in control at the break.

There was little to choose between the two sides after half-time with Norton protecting their lead and keeping Fisher at bay.



Picture: ION V GRAY

ASSIST: Michael Green was a man of the match

The result was finally put beyond doubt six minutes from the end of normal time. Baverstock raced on to a through ball from Lewis Taylor, making his debut after being released from Herne Bay, and produced a fine finish from the edge of the penalty area.

Norton host an in-form Sevenoaks Town this Saturday, kick-off 3pm.

CRICKET

Trent Bridge visit first up for Kent

KENT'S opening game on their return to Division One of the LV County Championship next season will be a trip to play Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge, starting on April 15.

The county's 2010 fixture list was released last week and Kent's first home championship game, following their Division Two title success this year, will be against Yorkshire at Canterbury, starting on April 21.

Rob Key's side begin their season with a friendly against Loughborough University at Canterbury, starting on April 10, while county champions Durham visit St Lawrence for a four-day match, starting on May 17.

Next season sees the return of the popular 40-over Sunday League format and Kent Spitfires' first match in the new ECB 40 League will be against Warwickshire Bears at Canterbury on April 25.

The Friends Provident Twenty20 Cup has been extended for 2010 and Kent Spitfires will play 16 group matches, eight at home and eight away. Kent's first match will be away to the Essex Eagles on June 2.

The St Lawrence Ground will also host the touring Pakistan team in June and two under-19 internationals between England and Australia in August.

KENT CRICKET FIXTURES 2010

(Home fixtures in red)

APRIL

- 10 - KENT v Loughborough UCCE, St Lawrence - University match
- 15 - Nottinghamshire v KENT, Trent Bridge - LVCC Div 1
- 21 - KENT v Yorkshire, St Lawrence - LVCC Div 1
- 25 - KENT SPITFIRES v Warwickshire Bears, St Lawrence - ECB 40 League
- 27 - Lancashire v KENT, Old Trafford - LVCC Div 1

MAY

- 2 - KENT SPITFIRES v Durham Dynamos, St Lawrence - ECB 40 League
- 4 - KENT v Warwickshire, St Lawrence - LVCC Div 1
- 8 - Nottinghamshire Outlaws v KENT SPITFIRES, Trent Bridge - ECB 40 League
- 10 - Essex v KENT, Chelmsford - LVCC Div 1
- 16 - Warwickshire Bears v KENT SPITFIRES, Edgbaston - ECB 40 League
- 17 - KENT v Durham, St Lawrence - LVCC Div 1
- 22 - Scottish Saltires v KENT SPITFIRES, Citylets Grange - ECB 40 League
- 24 - Durham v KENT, Riverside - LVCC Div 1
- 31 - KENT SPITFIRES v Scottish Saltires, St Lawrence - ECB 40 League

JUNE

- 2 - Essex Eagles v KENT SPITFIRES, Chelmsford - Twenty20 Cup
- 3 - Hampshire Hawks v KENT SPITFIRES, The Rose Bowl - Twenty20 Cup
- 4 - KENT v Nottinghamshire, The Nevill Ground - LVCC Div 1
- 9 - KENT SPITFIRES v Sussex Sharks, TBC - Twenty20 Cup
- 11 - KENT SPITFIRES v Middlesex Panthers, TBC - Twenty20 Cup
- 13 - Gloucestershire Gladiators v KENT SPITFIRES, County Ground - Twenty20 Cup
- 18 - Surrey Brown Caps v KENT SPITFIRES, The Brit Oval - Twenty20 Cup
- 20 - KENT SPITFIRES v Somerset Sabres, TBC - Twenty20
- 23 - KENT SPITFIRES v Surrey Brown Caps, TBC - Twenty20 Cup
- 24 - Middlesex Panthers v KENT SPITFIRES, Lords - Twenty20 Cup
- 27 - Sussex Sharks v KENT SPITFIRES, Hove - Twenty20 Cup
- 28 - KENT v Pakistan, St Lawrence - Tourist match

JULY

- 2 - KENT SPITFIRES v Hampshire Hawks, TBC - Twenty20 Cup
- 4 - KENT SPITFIRES v Gloucestershire Gladiators, TBC - Twenty20 Cup
- 5 - Hampshire v KENT, The Rose Bowl - LVCC Div 1
- 9 - KENT SPITFIRES v Essex Eagles, TBC - Twenty20 Cup
- 11 - KENT SPITFIRES v Glamorgan Dragons, TBC - Twenty20 Cup
- 16 - Glamorgan Dragons v KENT SPITFIRES, The Swalec Stadium - Twenty20 Cup
- 18 - Somerset Sabres v KENT SPITFIRES, Taunton - Twenty20 Cup
- 20 - Somerset v KENT, Taunton - LVCC Div 1
- 25 - KENT SPITFIRES v Hampshire Hawks, St Lawrence - ECB 40 League
- 29 - KENT v Essex, St Lawrence - LVCC Div 1

AUGUST

- 3 - KENT v Somerset, St Lawrence - LVCC Div 1
- 8 - KENT SPITFIRES v Leicestershire Foxes, St Lawrence - ECB 40 League
- 12 - England U19 v Australia U19, St Lawrence - Under-19 ODI
- 13 - England U19 v Australia U19, St Lawrence - Under-19 ODI
- 18 - KENT v Lancashire, St Lawrence - LVCC Div 1
- 22 - KENT SPITFIRES v Nottinghamshire Outlaws, St Lawrence - ECB 40 League
- 29 - Hampshire Hawks v KENT SPITFIRES, The Rose Bowl - ECB 40 League
- 30 - Leicestershire Foxes v KENT SPITFIRES, Grace Road - ECB 40 League
- 31 - Warwickshire v KENT, Edgbaston - LVCC Div 1

SEPTEMBER

- 4 - Durham Dynamos v KENT SPITFIRES, Riverside - ECB 40 League
- 7 - KENT v Hampshire, St Lawrence - LVCC Div 1
- 13 - Yorkshire v KENT, Headingley - LVCC Div 1



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